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Rewarding educators and education leaders in research- intensive universities

Dr Dilly Fung and Dr Claire Gordon

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Executive summary

So all the pieces are in place, but it's not quite joined up and having the effect that we would hope yet. I think that's probably where we're at. (HED2.7)

There's always going to be a big divide between education and research, unless something fundamental changes. (HOD4.2)

Purpose of the study

This study set out to investigate the challenge of ensuring that educators and education-focused leaders in research-intensive institutions – whatever their job title – are appropriately rewarded for their work. At a time of growing emphasis on the importance of high quality student education nationally and internationally (BIS/Johnson 2015; Gunn and Fisk 2013; Land and Gordon 2013, 2015; McAleese 2013; Olsson and Roxå 2013), this is vital not only for individual career prospects but also for the sustainability and success of institutions and of the sector. We focus on the 24 Russell Group institutions in the UK, but the findings, analysis and recommendations are likely to be applicable to the research-intensive higher education sector in Europe and globally.

Investigating key developments, challenges and perceptions, we recommend steps that can be taken to enhance consistency and transparency of practices in relation to 'job families', career progression and promotion criteria. We also note the increasing importance of professional development, recognition and review to Russell Group institutions, and the growing number and scope of institutional academic development schemes aligned to the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF 2011).

More fundamentally, we identify ways of reframing the debate. We argue that research-intensives have very promising opportunities to move forward into the new era by explicitly recreating and re-stating (i) distinctive models of academic education leadership, which speak to clearer definitions of 'teaching excellence', and (ii) distinctive models of research-based education, which maximise research-education synergies for both staff and students. We argue that both possibilities have the potential to create the cultural changes needed for education to have 'parity of esteem' with research and to send strong signals, in the era of the new UK Teaching Excellence Framework, about the particular contributions made by research-intensives to student education. We conclude with a summary of recommendations for both institutions and the sector as a whole, and offer a set of self-evaluative benchmarking questions for institutions to use as a catalyst for discussion and action.

Research questions and methodology

Our study centred on two questions:

1. How are educators and education leaders currently employed, rewarded and regarded in research-intensive institutions?
2. How and why are these practices changing, and how might they change further to meet the needs of such institutions in the modern era?

We analysed external and internal contexts and drivers for change, particularly in the light of the forthcoming Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) (BIS/Johnson 2015; BIS 2015), and then explored current job families, career pathways and promotion criteria from all 24 institutions, using information in the public domain. We conducted semi-structured interviews with ten Russell Group Pro-Vice Chancellors (PVCs) or equivalent, who have responsibility for the educational success of their institution, and held two focus groups and four interviews with Heads of Department. We also held two focus groups with Heads of Education Development, whose roles typically focus on enhancing the quality of education in an institution and developing its academic staff, and conducted one interview with an executive search company charged with facilitating senior academic appointments. Finally we had access to the transcripts of 16 semi-structured interviews with staff in three Russell Group institutions conducted for an ongoing study (Duhs *et al.* forthcoming). These interviewees had all been awarded a Senior Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy, through their respective institutional professional development schemes, for their commitment to and leadership in education ('teaching and learning') in their field. Following ethical approval, all interviews and focus groups were carried out in line with the BERA ethical code for educational research (BERA 2011). They were professionally transcribed and analysed thematically.

Terminology and definitions

In this study we use the word 'education' rather than the phrase 'teaching and learning', and 'educator' rather than 'teacher', to reflect the breadth of the collective educational mission, which goes beyond the individualised practice of teaching. We include as educators both those whose roles focus particularly on education, for example, 'teaching fellows' (TFs) or 'university teachers', and academics with a dual 'research and education' role, who make up the majority of staff who teach. Within the latter group, we note the contributions of academics who at some time in their career commit themselves primarily to education. We use the term 'education-focused' rather than 'teaching only' to refer to staff whose primary responsibility at a given time is for education in their discipline or across disciplines; these staff have roles which typically extend beyond 'teaching', and the 'teaching only' term is seen by some participants in our study to appear as both limiting and pejorative.

By 'reward', we mean anything given in recognition of the service given, but in the current report we focus predominantly on reward through promotion, since participants in the study consistently express the view that promotion and opportunities for career development are by far the most highly valued kind of reward. Finally, 'education leaders' is a term explicitly analysed in the study; we use it to refer to individuals who make a significant, even transformational, impact for good on others (a team, a department, the institution and/or the sector), and do not limit it to those who hold formal leadership and management roles.

Findings and discussion

Drivers for change

The demands of the Research Excellence Framework (REF) and of maximising prestige and income through internationally excellent research publications and impact have been well documented (Locke 2014), and it would be naïve to suggest that this will not remain a key priority for research-intensive universities. However, there is also evidence that times are changing, and that institutional 'mood music' is becoming more explicitly orientated towards valuing education alongside research.

Drawing on a range of literature and on our own data sets, we explored perceptions of external drivers for change. We also examined the ways in which internal institutional drivers have been shaping shifts in policy and practice within the institutions. We found a strongly expressed commitment from PVCs (Education) to take action to raise the level of esteem and opportunity afforded to education-focused staff, and in many cases, although not all, an explicit aim to establish 'parity of esteem' for educators, researcher-educators and researchers. The period immediately following the 2014 REF has been seen as a time to revisit the research-education balance:

By the time the promotion criteria for learning and teaching came in, the REF was more or less a done deal, and so there was a sense of, 'Is it time to rebalance?' ... As a research-intensive university, have we gone a bit too far? And I think there would always be that point in the cycle where you could just have another look and think, yes ... we are creating undesirable outcomes by only privileging research in the promotion round. (PVC10.3)

Other participants in our study expressed a keen awareness of external drivers linked with policy changes and the reputational impact of league tables. They also articulated concerns with respect to internal drivers, including the need to motivate and appropriately reward researchers, educators and the many who are researcher-educators and who have to balance a dual portfolio, as well as the need to manage the multiple priorities of different institutional strategies.

We observed wide agreement that there had been and still were, to varying degrees, considerable disincentives for academic staff to commit too much time to education, as the markers of esteem and promotion opportunities came through achieving particular research 'metrics', in line with those evaluated in the Research Excellence Framework. This finding echoed those in a number of recent publications (Gunn and Fisk 2013; Cashmore *et al.* 2013; Graham 2015). Strong views were expressed about the importance of clear and consistent messages 'from the top' of each institution, in relation to the need for a balanced 'research and education' institutional mission in the face of current drivers. PVCs were typically very aware of this:

Giving the message at a senior level that [education] is as important as research, that it's a core part of our mission [and] recognised as such, with equal prominence given to our education achievement as to our REF achievements, makes a difference. (PVC2.4)

Recommendation 1

We recommend that senior management teams in research-intensive institutions (i) develop a credible and persuasive narrative regarding the importance of education to the institutional mission, in the context of competing drivers for change, (ii) ensure that this narrative is reiterated consistently to internal and external audiences and (iii) use the narrative explicitly to inform and shape changes to reward and recognition processes.

Job families and opportunities for promotion

Our data show that in response to this spectrum of drivers many Russell Group institutions have been addressing the ways in which 'job families' and role profiles are constituted. They have also been revisiting the promotion criteria and processes associated with them. The ways in which job families are named and constituted in the institutions vary considerably, and we observed a complex, shifting and problematic variety of nomenclature and promotion stages. Locke observes that

Academic staff are defined by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) as those responsible for planning, directing and undertaking academic teaching and/or research. They also include vice-chancellors, medical practitioners, dentists, veterinarians and other health care professionals who undertake lecturing or research activities. (Locke 2014, p. 6)

Despite this apparently clear definition of the term 'academic', a number of institutions do not themselves define their teaching staff, or certain sub-groups of teaching staff, as academic, and this appears to be at the heart of a number of frustrations and perceived inequalities of opportunity. Superior opportunities for career progression and reward are experienced by educators who are deemed to be academics, in comparison with those who are defined as academic-related or even categorised as 'professional services' staff. Perceptions of inequity are exacerbated by an acute awareness of insufficient representation among the advantaged group of academics by women and black and minority ethnic staff; this is then magnified at the most senior grades and in senior management posts, which are predominantly held by white men who have been promoted through an academic route which privileges research success over other academic contributions (Coate and Kandiko Howson 2014; Morley 2013, 2014).

In addition, our data suggest that among academics on typical contracts that encompass both research and education, there is also frustration. This is because the reward for committing seriously to education and/or to education leadership is perceived to be very much less than that gained through commitment to and success in research. Considering issues of identity and equality of opportunity arising for educators, we argue that institutions should consider education and educators to be contributors to the core academic mission and that this should be equitably reflected in job family structures.

Recommendation 2

We recommend that research-intensive institutions review their 'job families' to ensure that all staff with substantive posts as teachers and/or education leaders are (i) defined as academic, in line with the HESA definition, and (ii) afforded opportunities to rise to the most senior posts on the basis of the strength and scope of their contribution to the institution's educational mission. If these recommendations cannot be effected, a clear rationale should be given to staff explaining why this is so, and parallel markers of esteem and opportunities for promotion should be developed.

Promotion criteria and their application

We analysed perceptions of the kinds of promotion criteria currently used to enable individuals to progress within those job families and of the work undertaken by promotions panels in applying those criteria. Some participants were confident that criteria were fair and transparent; others, even from the same institution, felt that they continued to privilege research-related achievements and 'metrics', and that promotion panels did not fairly represent the apparently growing importance of education to the institutional mission.

We argue, along with a number of participants in our study, that a **strength-based promotions strategy** should be implemented. The criteria and the format of applications should enable an individual's claim for promotion to be considered holistically, on the basis of the strength of the overall contribution made in their context, rather than through a standardised 'tick box' approach. This is especially important for those in the many atypical academic roles, which are more prevalent in professional fields such as medicine, law and engineering. Promotion criteria need to be broadly configured as principles of contribution with illustrative criteria, so that any

individual, even one from a highly atypical context, can make a case for promotion and be rewarded appropriately and equitably by their peers.

With respect to promotion panels and processes, we noted the usefulness of considering an individual's 'scope of activity' and their 'sphere of influence' in the round, drawing on a range of sources of evidence for their effectiveness in relation to their educational contribution (see HEA 2013, p. 3). Our data also suggested that promotion panels should comprise experts in education and education leadership as well as senior research-focused and 'dual focus' academics.

Recommendations 3 and 4

We recommend that research-intensive institutions review their promotion criteria to ensure that (i) they illustrate accurately the current balance of academic priorities, in line with the institutional mission and (ii) they are fully understood by academics.

We recommend that research-intensive institutions review promotion processes to ensure that (i) promotion panels have a diverse profile, fully inclusive of women and BME staff, (ii) panels represent academic expertise from both the research and education domains, (iii) all panel members are developed to understand issues of unconscious bias, and (iv) cases for promotion can be made by all educators, in any job family, on the basis of the strength of their overall contribution to the institution's mission.

Professional development, recognition and reward

We analysed data to address the theme of professional development, including the growing use nationally of the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) for framing 'professional recognition' (education-related qualifications) and the very variable role of professional development reviews (PDRs) or appraisals. We argue that an authentic developmental culture is vital for individuals and for the institution, and that developmental opportunities and regular, supportive professional reviews are increasingly important in ensuring that educators have access to rewards and prestige on a par with research-focused staff.

We noted the growth in academic development programmes and continuing professional development (CPD) schemes aligned with the UKPSF and accredited by the Higher Education Academy (HEA): 20 of the 24 Russell Group institutions now offer such schemes. Staff gaining Senior Fellowship of the HEA via peer review, having engaged with such schemes, expressed a strong sense of achievement and increased motivation to engage with education. However, the degree to which their achievements appeared to be valued with the wider culture of the department or institution, and the extent to which the award contributed to opportunities for promotion, varied considerably.

Experiences of PDR were mixed. The usefulness of authentic opportunities to review progress and plan for the future was evident, but the extent to which education-related issues and developmental opportunities arose in such meetings, where they occurred at all, varied. We argue that such events have the potential to encourage staff to commit to education as well as research (where appropriate) and to gain appropriate developmental opportunities, reward and recognition for so doing.

Attitudes to the importance of education-focused scholarship, referred to in current literature as the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) (see Fanghanel *et al.* 2015), were also mixed. Reservations were expressed about requiring staff with an international research portfolio in a home discipline to engage, in effect, in educational research. However, it was noted that, in line with the professional values of the UKPSF, all staff making a contribution to student education need to practise in ways which are evidence-informed, and that some may see opportunities for making an impact on their own practice and, potentially, the practice of others by undertaking scholarly investigations into education in their field.

We argue for a model of **strength-based scholarship**, which encourages individuals to play to their strengths, interests, values and contexts in developing scholarly practices. Persuasive reservations are expressed in our data with respect to making *publishing* on education-focused scholarship a mandatory requirement for promotion to the most senior posts, in any job family. However, we argue that where such scholarship *is* undertaken *and* where it makes a genuine impact on student education and on the practices of other educators, it should be recognised in promotion criteria alongside other markers of effectiveness and impact. Threshold engagement with education literature and scholarship, for example at the level indicated in Descriptor 2 of the UK Professional Standards

Framework (UKPSF 2011), should therefore be clearly distinguished from extended education-focused scholarship in the promotion criteria, and the latter should be recognised as taking many different forms.

Recommendations 5, 6 and 7

We recommend that research-intensive institutions review their provision for academic development to ensure that (i) it is sufficiently resourced to inform and engage academics who teach and who are education leaders throughout their careers, (ii) it provides relevant and authentic developmental opportunities to academics at all stages of their career, and (iii) it is aligned with agreed academic qualities and professional standards, for example through reference to the UK Professional Standards Framework, so that staff can gain and value professional recognition as higher education teachers and education leaders.

We recommend that research-intensive institutions review their use of periodic (typically annual) PDR to ensure that (i) it is genuinely supportive of individuals throughout their career, (ii) it pays appropriate attention to the successes and developmental needs associated with the education-related dimensions of the individual's work, and (iii) it is undertaken by reviewers who are appropriately developed to understand the importance of education to the institutional mission.

We recommend that research-intensive institutions (i) articulate the value of the contribution made by education-focused scholarship to the institution's evidence-base for developing practice, (ii) encourage all educators and education leaders to engage with scholarly literature sufficiently to ensure that practice is evidence-informed, at a threshold level, and (iii) enable individuals who wish to do so to continue to develop forms of education-focused scholarship designed to improve local or wider practices.

Prizes, awards and student engagement

Considering the role of awards and prizes for educators, which can also be markers of development, impact and prestige, we suggest that these be reviewed to ensure that they fit current priorities and that they reward collective success, for example by programme teams or departments, as well as individual contributions. We noted the importance of student engagement in this area and argue that students can work alongside staff as partners, not only by conceptualising and awarding prizes to staff who have made an impact, but also by collaborating with academic and professional staff to improve the richness and quality of student education within a research-rich context.

Recommendation 8

We recommend that research-intensive institutions review their provision of prizes and awards to ensure that they (i) reflect parity of esteem for education with research, (ii) reward collective as well as individual contribution and success, and (iii) work with students as partners not only to develop prizes and awards but also to develop and enhance reward and recognition for staff more broadly.

Emerging visions: academic education leadership and research-based education for a new era

Yes, it would be fantastic, wouldn't it, to have a Russell Group persona say, well, we get these students right to the top end of the academic capacity spectrum, so we can afford to help them develop their own narratives - through research, through high level engagements - and define excellence in the way that suited us? Without allowing other people to define different kinds of excellence. Getting rid of this idea that one size fits all, and that perfection exists. (PVC10.15)

Excellent teaching or academic education leadership? The promise of articulating levels of impact on student education

Our data indicate that a particular challenge for the research-intensive sector has been promoting education-focused staff to the most senior grades, and in order to analyse this we considered the relationship between 'teaching excellence' and effective higher education leadership. Distinguishing between the two was seen as challenging but necessary:

In terms of what we reward and recognise – you know, what counts as teaching excellence – are we looking for research and scholarship, stellar classroom practice, are we looking for some sort of institutional leadership role? ... I don't think we have an institutional position on what we prioritise or how we expect those to fit together. (HED2.11)

We argue that there is much more to education leadership than good teaching, and that institutions should, using a strength-based promotions strategy, reward individuals fully for the particular contribution they make towards the collective institutional mission and for the impact they make upon the quality of student education.

Drawing on literature, especially Land and Gordon 2015, and on data gathered for our study, we articulate a set of broad criteria with associated questions which might form the basis for promotion to a Professorial post for education-focused staff (Table 1). This way of framing education leadership may be useful for institutions as they develop and refine their own Professorial criteria.

Table 1: Articulating academic education leadership: towards criteria for promotion to a Professorial post	
Criteria	Key questions
Vision and implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How has the individual taken deliberate, strategic steps to develop high quality education in their field, or across fields? ➤ How has a clear vision for quality education, appropriate for a research-intensive context, been translated into a sequence of targeted and demonstrably effective actions? ➤ How has the individual deliberately drawn on an evidence-base, including evidence presented through relevant higher education literature and critical analysis of current practices, to ensure that steps taken to achieve the vision are evidence-informed?
Internal connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How has the individual helped to build connections within the team(s) in order to foster a shared commitment to high quality education within the research-rich disciplinary context? ➤ How has the individual fostered connections with other internal teams, for example, by developing partnerships with other departments or professional colleagues across the institution?
External connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How has the individual connected beyond the institution, for example, with alumni, with local, national or international organisations, or with employers' groups, to make a positive impact on student education? ➤ How has the individual's work made an impact externally, for example, through influencing subject associations, professional bodies or the work of other institutions?
Research–education synergies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How has the individual taken steps to enrich curriculum with research, both in content and through enquiry-based approaches to learning? ➤ How has the individual taken steps to engage students with leading research and researchers in the relevant field(s)? ➤ How has the individual fostered a culture in which students can participate in the practices of research, for example, through research dissemination and public engagement?
Overall impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Can the individual make a credible narrative that brings together all other elements, providing evidence of significant leadership contribution, and showing how the work has made a strategic impact upon the particular context in which s/he works? ➤ Can the individual articulate the overall contribution made to the institution's published vision(s) for high quality student education in a research-intensive context?

We suggest that Heads of Department can be better developed and empowered to make judgments about the value of an individual's contribution to the department's overall objectives, and better rewarded for doing so. Transformational leadership evidenced by individuals not in formal leadership roles should also be rewarded appropriately, and **education leadership should be fully recognised as a form of academic leadership**, equally as valuable to the institution as research leadership.

Recommendation 9

We recommend that research-intensive institutions, individually and/or in collaboration, (i) define clearly the differences between threshold teaching professionalism, teaching excellence and effective education leadership, and (ii) ensure that education leaders receive equivalent markers of prestige and opportunities for promotion to those experienced by research-focused leaders, including the title of Professor, on the basis of their leadership in and impact on the education domain.

Research equals teaching? The promise of research-based education

There is no contradiction between the imperative of good teaching and the imperative of research which critiques, refines, discards and advances human knowledge and understanding.

(McAleese 2013, p. 13)

Recognising the challenge of balancing educational priorities with those of research, we examined finally the potential for bringing the institutional missions relating to research and to education much closer together. Our data show an increasing interest in developing better synergies between education and research through new approaches to research-based education. We argue that breaking down some of the structural and conceptual divides between the two areas to develop distinctive new forms of research-based education could be highly effective in achieving 'parity of esteem' for educators and researchers, and also in sending strong signals to internal and external stakeholders about the distinctive contributions made by research-intensives to student education nationally and globally.

Recommendation 10

We recommend that research-intensive institutions (i) investigate ways of exploiting fully the synergies between research and education across the institution, for example by creating and resourcing a committee or developmental group whose focus this is and by refreshing their visions for distinctively research-based education, and (ii) engage, develop, empower and reward Heads of Department (or equivalent) to take a lead in developing research-education synergies in ways which are meaningful and effective in their disciplinary context(s).

Finally, we invite research-intensive institutions to use the self-evaluative benchmarking questions at the end of the full report to assess opportunities for enhancing practice and, where appropriate, develop a plan for change. The questions break down the recommendations above into more finely grained elements. Research-intensive institutions are proud of their diverse histories, structures and cultural characteristics, and not all institutions will answer the questions in similar ways, but using the questions as prompts could facilitate analytic discussion and creative ideas for new directions which meet institutional needs and express institutional values in the new era.

1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of the study

This study, funded by the UK Higher Education Academy (HEA) and conducted during 2015, sets out to explore the challenge of ensuring that educators in research-intensive institutions, whatever their job title, are appropriately rewarded for their work. It focuses in particular on the 24 institutions of the UK Russell Group, which defines its members as being:

committed to maintaining the very best research, an outstanding teaching and learning experience and unrivalled links with business and the public sector. (*Russell Group 2015a*)

However, the findings, thematic analysis and recommendations are likely to be applicable to other research-intensive higher institutions in the UK, in Europe, and globally. Indeed, many of the themes arising are relevant to the higher education (HE) sector as a whole, and speak to national and international policy.

The HE sector is changing rapidly, both across the UK and internationally, in the face of significant social, economic, reputational and political drivers. It is subject to the effects of what has been aptly described as “a volatile policy environment” (Taylor and McCaig 2014, p. 6). In the UK, the imminent introduction of a Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), which follows on from the establishment of a Research Excellence Framework (REF), is intended to incentivise universities to:

devote as much attention to the quality of teaching as fee-paying students and prospective employers have a right to expect. (*BIS/Johnson 2015*)

With this development, the recent growth of the professional recognition of staff who teach and support students’ learning in higher education, in line with the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF 2011), there is a renewed focus across the sector on defining and enhancing the quality of student education. Institutions whose national and international reputations have depended primarily on their research excellence and capacity are focusing afresh on the quality and distinctiveness of the student education provided by their staff.

Job titles, expectations, developmental opportunities, reward systems and career structures of educators vary widely across institutions in the Russell Group. However, there is a widely shared perception, supported by our data, that staff who focus particularly on their institution’s educational mission feel that they have fewer opportunities for reward and progression and less prestige than their colleagues who are more research-focused. This is particularly so in relation to gaining promotion to the most senior grades, and we therefore address the related issue of defining and rewarding education leadership.

This study thus aims to explore, against the backdrop of current policies and practices, the perceptions and lived experiences of a range of stakeholders who have a vested interest in the educational mission of their institution, including Pro-Vice-Chancellors (PVCs) or equivalent. It offers recommendations for both institutions and the sector as a whole, and concludes with a set of ‘self-evaluative benchmarking questions’ with respect to developing and rewarding educators and education leaders for institutions to consider.

This study was conducted during 2015 by researchers from two Russell Group institutions:

- > Dr Dilly Fung (UCL) Principal Investigator
- > Dr Claire Gordon (LSE) Co-investigator

1.2. Literature: a brief review

Our study draws on a number of theoretical framings and upon several different literatures, including research-informed academic and policy documents and the ‘grey’ literature of organisations and institutions. Through our analysis we make reference to selected groups of literature:

- > **higher education policy.** Literature which analyses changing academic roles and careers (e.g. Locke 2014) and patterns of promotion (e.g. Olsson and Roxå 2013);
- > **philosophical and historical analyses of higher education.** Literature which addresses the wider questions around the nature and purpose of the modern university. We draw on philosophical literature (Barnett 2000; 2010; 2011; Rowland 2006) which considers what it means to be an ‘authentic’ university in the modern era and explores the opportunities institutions still have to frame their own vision and strategy. We also refer to literature reviewing the historical context of higher education (e.g. Macfarlane 2015);

- > **socio-cultural critiques.** In relation to issues of equality of opportunity. We draw on work by Blackmore and Kandiko (2011) on the notion of 'prestige economy', and work by Archer (2008), Clegg (2008), Morley (2013; 2014) and Skelton (2012) on academic identity;
- > **literature relating to education-focused scholarship,** which explores the professionalisation of teaching in HE and the role of 'the scholarship of teaching and learning' (SoTL) in developing staff and in their professional recognition (teaching qualifications) (e.g. Fanghanel *et al.* 2015);
- > **literature on leadership and organisations** (e.g. Bryman 2007, 2009; Bolden *et al.* 2008, 2011 and 2013), which addresses the complexities of exploring the notion of 'leadership' in general, and in an academic context in particular. These works also point to helpful ways of framing leadership as a social process, not contingent upon charismatic individuals, and as having the potential to be not just strategically instrumental, but transformative for individuals, groups and institutions;
- > **higher education literature addressing relationships between research and education** (e.g. Locke 2005; Barnett ed. 2005), which raises the possibilities for research-led teaching or, more fundamentally, research-based education (e.g. Brew 2006, 2010; Healey and Jenkins 2009).

We benefited particularly from drawing on some very recent work by Locke (2014) and Locke *et al.* (2016), and from other publications that address directly issues of roles and promotions in the HE sector (Cashmore and Ramsden 2009; Cashmore *et al.* 2013; Land and Gordon 2015; Olsson and Roxå 2013). We note the particular relevance of the work by an international consortium on *Promoting Teaching* (HEA 2013, 2014), which included a Russell Group institution (University of Newcastle). Studies focusing on and exploring definitions of 'teaching excellence' (e.g. Gunn and Fisk 2013; Land and Gordon 2013; Skelton 2004, 2005) have also informed our analysis.

Also of immediate relevance were publications on career prospects for educators from professional bodies and associations, including from the Academy of Medical Sciences (2014) and a very recent, persuasive report from the Royal Academy of Engineering (Graham 2015). Graham's finding that there are "profound and entrenched differences in perspective between university managers and those engaged in delivering engineering education 'on the ground'" (2015, p. 2) helped us shape the design of our study such that we could triangulate the perspectives and developments at the level of senior leadership with the perspectives and experiences of staff within departments.

In future academic papers, we will explore our themes in greater depth in relation to particular theoretical framings; this report thus serves as an introductory publication, drawing eclectically on the literary landscape to inform through data or illustrate through argument.

1.3. Research questions

We address two core questions:

1. How are educators and education leaders currently employed, rewarded and regarded in research-intensive institutions?
2. How and why are these practices changing, and how might they change further to meet the needs of such institutions in the modern era?

To find answers, we considered the following related questions:

1. What do current promotion policies and criteria in research-intensive institutions say with respect to promoting and rewarding those who teach and lead on education ('teaching and learning')?
2. How do current processes reflect policy and apply criteria?
3. What drivers and intentions are there to change any of the above?
4. To what extent, if any, is professional recognition via the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF 2011) feeding into current policies and processes?
5. What do staff in research-intensive institutions consider to be 'good practice' in relation to rewarding educators and education leaders in the modern era?

1.4. Methodology

We pursued a mixed-methods, multi-level approach to data collection, and our findings are derived from the systematic analysis and triangulation of a tapestry of data sets:

- current policy statements and promotion criteria in relation to education-focused staff from each of the 24 institutions, which are publicly available;
- semi-structured interviews with ten Russell Group Pro-Vice-Chancellors (or equivalent) to gain the perspectives of senior academic leaders responsible for education in their institutions (PVCs 1-10);
- two focus groups and four interviews with Heads of Departments (HoDs 1-6);
- two focus groups with Heads of Education Development (HEDs1 and HEDs2), who typically work across strategic and operational levels in Russell Group institutions, to get an overview of current institutional developments and gather illustrative examples of institutional cultures;
- one illustrative interview with an executive search 'headhunter', who is frequently charged with aiding Russell Group institutions with senior appointments (HH);
- relevant wider literature (see 1.3 above).

In addition, we had access to the transcripts of 16 interviews with staff from three institutions who had been awarded professional recognition as Senior Fellows of the Higher Education Academy through the continuing professional development (CPD) schemes of their respective institutions (SFs1-16), collected for another study still in progress (Duhs *et al.* forthcoming). A Senior Fellow award, which is peer reviewed, signifies effective leadership and mentoring of others in relation to teaching and/or supporting students' learning (UKPSF 2011, p. 5).

Ethical approval was gained through the University College London (UCL) Ethics Committee, and we followed practices throughout as recommended by the British Educational Research Association (BERA 2011), keeping all records stored behind passwords and removing obvious markers that would identify participants. Participants were asked to sign a consent form, and provided with details of the study including the right to opt out at any time.

All interviews and focus groups were digitally recorded and professionally transcribed. The transcripts were analysed individually by the two lead investigators and then collaboratively with valuable input from our research assistant, Dr Karen Leslie (University of Exeter). We looked particularly for repeated motifs and references in the texts, noting similarities and differences. In our analysis, we include a number of direct quotations in order to capture, as far as is possible, the nuanced language and meanings of the participants.

It should be noted that both researchers are members of staff in Russell Group institutions and, therefore, 'insider researchers'. This has the disadvantage of our having inevitably previously developed ideas based on our own experiences, but the advantage of giving us insights into many of the nuances of these very complex organisations.

1.5. Definitions and terminology

Our discussions will return in 2.4 to the importance of language and nomenclature in relation to markers of prestige, and to what has been referred to as the 'prestige economy' (Blackmore and Kandiko 2011), but here we clarify what we mean by key terms used in this paper, particularly those used in the title of the report:

- we use the term 'education' rather than the commonly used phrase 'teaching and learning', in recognition of the multi-faceted education-related work undertaken by individuals, teams and institutions;
- by 'reward' we mean anything given in recognition of the service given. In line with the limited length of this study and with the findings from our data, however, we focus particularly on reward through promotion, because of the significant financial and career-related benefits that can bring. We include, however, a section on prizes and awards (2.6);
- by 'educators' we mean anyone who makes a significant contribution to the education of students through their role in teaching, assessing and supporting students' progression. In a longer study, we would investigate the ways in which the special contributions of staff such as technical specialists, library and skills advisers and graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) are rewarded, but given the scope of this study we limit our focus to staff in the 'lecturer' and 'teaching fellow' (or similar) categories;
- by 'education leaders', we mean anyone who demonstrates significant leadership qualities and impact by strategically shaping, delivering and enhancing educational provision, in line with the institutional mission. We problematise the notion of education leadership explicitly (3.1), but elect to adopt here an inclusive usage, *not* restricting the term to those who hold 'management' roles such as Head of Department or formal roles such as committee chair;
- by 'education-focused staff' we mean those whose role is predominantly focused on student education, although we recognise that such staff may be on a 'dual focus', 'research and education' academic contract or on what is commonly referred to as 'teaching only' contract (see 2.3). We avoid using the term 'teaching only' as our data suggest that it is seen by some to convey a sense that teaching is 'second class', and indeed many

staff on such contracts undertake duties other than teaching. In addition, 'teaching' may not effectively convey the many roles undertaken by a university educator;

- we use the term 'research-focused' to apply to staff on 'research only' contracts, as many research staff also contribute to student education;
- we use the terms 'dual focus academics' or 'researcher educators' to apply to staff whose contract conveys a dual responsibility for education and research. (We note that academic practice can also comprise other areas, such as enterprise and public engagement, but take research and education to be the two core activities).

2. Findings and discussion

2.1. The shifting context of higher education in the United Kingdom

It is widely agreed in the broader literature that the tensions between the research and education dimensions of the academic role were amplified by the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), first introduced in 1986. Its replacement in 2014, the Research Excellence Framework (REF), took a particularly acute form in research-intensive institutions, whose mission and identity have been closely linked to claims of excellence in research output (Young 2006; Cashmore and Ramsden 2009). In 2010, the Russell Group stated on its website that its objectives were to:

- > lead the research efforts of the United Kingdom;
- > maximise the income of its member institutions;
- > attract the best staff and students to its member institutions;
- > create a regulatory environment in which it can achieve these objectives by reducing government interference; and
- > identify ways to co-operate to exploit the universities' collaborative advantage¹.

Mention of education at that time was limited. This was a reflection of the broader national academic career context at the time, with reward and recognition structures being strongly influenced by the REF/RAE. That insufficient emphasis had been given to the educational priorities of Russell Group universities was indirectly acknowledged in its 2014 policy paper, *A Passion for Learning*:

In fact we have become victims of our own success at research because what has received far less attention – although it is equally important to us – is the outstanding education we give our students.
(Russell Group 2014)

Our study corroborates recent research identifying a shift in priorities across the research-intensive sector. In response to a speech by Jo Johnson, Minister of State for Universities and Science, Wendy Piatt, Director General and Chief Executive of the Russell Group, outlined the Russell Group's position (July 2015) in relation to Johnson's plans to introduce a Teaching Excellence Framework:

Our universities are committed to providing an outstanding student experience where teaching is enhanced by world-class research and facilities. (Russell Group 2015b)

This is most concretely reflected in the ways in which education and education leadership are being recognised, communicated about and rewarded within these institutions, and forms a major focus of the current report.

As Macfarlane (2015) has recently noted, elite British higher education institutions were not always predominantly focused on their research. He cites a study by Halsey and Trow (1971), which concluded that British academics were "overwhelmingly oriented towards teaching". However, our data suggest that the development of excellent research 'outputs' have been, at least until recently, increasingly prioritised in research-intensive universities at the expense of other dimensions of the academic role. Reward and recognition for academics have been very closely linked to their research performance (PVC9.3); the separation of the funding of research and education in higher education institutions in 1991 (Barr 1993, p. 357) and the establishment of a direct link between funding and measurable performance via the Research Assessment Exercise arguably offered a relatively easily quantifiable set of measures for reward, at least in comparison with the challenges of measuring excellence in education. Promotion criteria at different steps of the academic career ladder were thus characterised by an imbalance: on the research side, calibrated sets of criteria were developed, but 'teaching and learning' tended to be only cursorily mentioned or even omitted.

In some settings members of staff focusing more on education found themselves sidelined into so-called professional contracts or time-bound fellowship positions, which tended to be disproportionately occupied by women (Locke 2014), suggesting the presence of underlying equity issues. The successful academic was perceived to be an individual producing high quality research throughout her or his career. As indicated across our data sets, a clear signal was often given to academics that focusing too much time on education, or on other aspects of

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russell_Group#cite_note-Russell-1

academic work such as activities categorised as service, citizenship, public engagement or enterprise, could harm an individual's career progression, as was neatly encapsulated in the oft-repeated mantra 'publish or perish'. Teaching and learning, or the more broadly construed notions of education and education leadership, played second fiddle to research for many academics pursuing a career in a research-intensive HE setting.

The 1997 Dearing Report was a clear signal from the UK government of the intention to refocus attention on the quality of teaching and learning in universities (NCIHE 1997; Cashmore and Ramsden 2009; Cashmore *et al.* 2013). This was further reinforced in the 2003 government White Paper, *The Future of Higher Education*:

Effective teaching and learning is essential if we are to promote excellence and opportunity in higher education. High quality teaching must be recognised and rewarded, and best practice shared. (*DfES 2003, p. 7*)

It took clearer shape again in the 2011 White Paper, *Students at the Heart of the System*, which emphasised parity of prestige:

We want there to be a renewed focus on high-quality teaching in universities so that it has the same prestige as research. (*BIS 2011, p. 2*)

The Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), articulated in the 2015 Green Paper on Higher Education (BIS 2015), is evidently the next step in the Government's efforts to raise the priority of education or 'teaching and learning' in UK higher education:

Currently, not all universities assign teaching the same significance that they give research. Significant funding is allocated through the Research Excellence Framework (REF) to universities who deliver high quality research. There is no mechanism in place to reward teaching, resulting in a lack of focus on providing a high quality student experience. Some rebalancing of the pull between teaching and research is undoubtedly required: this should not be at the expense of research, but through additional incentives to drive up teaching quality. (*BIS 2015, p. 12*)

The ways in which the TEF unfolds after the period of consultation on the Green Paper could have a significant effect on how the relationship between research and education in the higher education sector evolves in the future. The challenge of identifying 'teaching excellence' metrics, which are expected to feed into the incentive structures of institutions and the lived experiences of individual academics as they balance the demands of research and education, lies beyond the scope of this report. But it is highly likely that the TEF, directed at English institutions, will fundamentally affect the external incentive structure in which UK HE operates. This in turn will affect the internal dynamics of institutional employment and career structures.

2.2. The external context shaping the reward and recognition of education

The higher education funding challenge

UK research-intensives universities in the late 20th and early 21st centuries have been faced with a range of complex and seemingly conflicting challenges: how might an appropriate, authentic and effective relationship between research and education be developed in the context of new funding structures and a rapidly changing global environment? Changes to the funding of higher education in recent decades have included:

- > a huge expansion of the numbers of UK students entering higher education, from approximately 6% of the relevant age group in the 1960s (Barr 1993, p. 360) to crossing the 50% threshold in 2015;
- > the separation of the funding of research and teaching in 1991 (Barr 1993, p. 357);
- > the increasing prioritisation given to research excellence, particularly in a small number of elite institutions. The identity of the Russell Group crystallised around this mission, in contrast with that of the new wave of post-1992 universities.

These were key factors shaping the incentive structures of the research-intensive sector in the UK at the turn of the century.

The higher education market place opened up, with a shift first to a fixed student fee payment of £1,000 per annum (from 1998), then to £3,000 (2006), and then to the introduction of a variable fee structure, with universities entitled to charge up to £9,000 from 2012. This was followed by the removal of the cap on student numbers, first announced in December 2013, with a relaxation of the cap in 2014-15 and its complete abolition a

year later. In the meantime the 2010 Browne report (BIS 2010) heralded a major shift in research funding, with government funding focused almost entirely upon STEM (science-related) subjects.

These changes in the numbers of students in UK higher education and in the funding of education and research have taken place in the context of the growing internationalisation of the HE landscape. They have placed increasingly competitive pressures on higher education institutions in the UK to provide students with an education fit for purpose for the 21st century. The intended linking of variable fee structures to ratings based on the set of metrics referred to in the Government's Green Paper on the TEF (BIS 2015) will pose additional pressures on HEI leaderships to develop their educational offering accordingly.

Our interview data suggest that changing national funding structures of higher education and the introduction of fees have been central factors shaping the thinking behind reward and recognition for education in many research-intensive institutions:

It's students paying fees, knowing that the dynamic of their expectation and indeed their families' expectations has meant a concentration on what we spend fees on. (PVC2.4)

Some PVCs interviewed specifically pinpointed the introduction of variable fees as a key driving factor:

David Willetts in his ministership - and a lot of us - have been restating the notion that in the new fee regime we need to be more balanced in terms of recognising, rewarding and raising the profile of teaching. (PVC9.3)

Increased pressures resulting from a fee-paying student body were also underlined by an interview with a director of an executive search company:

I think most people would say that students have styled themselves more and more as consumers, that they have started to be more and more demanding in the manner of consumers. (HH1.4)

Others pointed to a longer-term trajectory pre-dating the introduction of variable fees. They identify the strategic challenge of remaining globally competitive and see the re-soldering of the fragmented linkages between research and education as integral to this objective:

If we look at what's characteristic of institutions which perform even more strongly globally, you get a sense of a creative tension between research and education... and I think that's the key driver for it. (PVC1.3)

The internationalisation of higher education and the global market for academics and students

With universities operating in a global marketplace, research excellence as measured according to league tables undoubtedly remains a key factor. Those working in executive search highlighted the internationalisation of academia, and the importance of international measurability and comparability of research excellence, in contrast to 'teaching' as a driving factor in recruitment and the continued prioritisation of research:

[The internationalisation of higher education] has put a premium on the sort of tradable goods side of being an academic, and research is the tradable good par excellence... A publication in a top journal is a meal ticket and it thereby increases your marketability, your value, including financially - and it is this hard, international, unambiguous currency. (HH1.8)

Research-intensive universities, which compete on an international scale, may be driven to prioritise research to maintain their international standing so that they can continue to attract the 'best and brightest' academics and students. At times this may be thought to be at the expense of focusing on the student experience, but in the short term at least it enables universities to continue to attract students.

The dynamics here are not at all straightforward. There are clearly certain tensions in the practical rebalancing of the research-education nexus; in some cases, strong disciplinary variations are at play. One PVC highlighted a clear tension between the imperative to remain globally competitive through the university's research standing, which is needed to sustain high global rankings and attract top internationally renowned scholars to the institution, and financial pressures inducing the university leadership to concentrate more on the education domain:

The most important driver at senior management level is a recognition that to be globally competitive as a leading research institution, faculty salaries grow at a ridiculous rate... So we have the problem of reconciling our brand with our product. Unless we make the education offer ... consistent with our research standing and our global brand, we have a long-term existential problem. (PVC3.2)

This disconnect was underlined in our interview with a headhunter who also expressed a view that high-level professorial appointments are still driven by an individual's research record, even though there were potentially contradictions inherent in this approach:

In the humanities and social sciences [education is] their primary source of income, and the humanities and social sciences themselves are often bankrolling other parts of the university. So there may be a disconnect between the focus on research versus the fact that if you don't get the teaching right, then actually most universities are going to go out of business... But the idea that we appointed somebody whose research wasn't great but they had a really great story to tell as educators, I have not found that to be a particularly common strand of [senior management] thinking. (HH1.3-4)

Hard and pressing calculations about how to make universities economically sustainable, given changing fee structures and the complex set of pressures resulting from the internationalisation of education, are clearly important in explaining the need at this time for a rebalancing of the relationship between research and education in research-intensive universities. However, it is also evident that there has been a revisiting of values and questioning about the nature of higher education. What is the role of the modern academic, and what is the place of education in the context of research-intensive institutions? These questions, explored by a number of thinkers in recent years (see e.g. Barnett 2010, 2011; Rowland 2006) speak to the fundamental nature of higher education: what exactly is 'higher' about higher education, and what is distinctive about education in a research-intensive context? The relative weight attached to these different dimensions; that is, the hard economic questions on the one hand and more values-based orientations (commitment to the 'parity of esteem' of education and research and the value of a research-based education) on the other; is hard to pin down precisely. It inevitably varies from one institution to another and appears to be influenced by the outlook of key individuals in those institutions, but it is clear that both factors are at play.

Performance indicators – the student experience and teaching quality

Measuring performance in education in terms of 'teaching excellence' and student satisfaction poses significant challenges to the higher education sector. These have been thrust to the centre of the policy debate with the publication of the Green Paper on the Teaching Excellence Framework (BIS 2015). Given their original mission, research-intensive universities have long been motivated to achieve a high standing in their domestic and international research rankings. Now other measures of success are increasingly being factored into decision-making processes among university senior management.

Domestically in the UK, the reputational effect of strong or weak performance in the annual National Student Survey (NSS) has taken on an increasing importance since it was first introduced in 2005 (HOD6.4). It now plays a significant role in the calculations of university leaderships across the sector, with research-intensive institutions increasingly concerned about their university and departmental standings:

NSS is a key driver; it is one of our KPIs [Key Performance Indicators]. (PVC2.5)

Comprehensive response systems, including targets for improvement, have been established in a number of institutions in response to NSS results:

We have a highly developed process of using the NSS on an annual basis... every department produces an annual report and an action plan against their data... We as an institution agreed that every discipline should be in the upper two quartiles of their discipline. (PVC4.4)

The previously strongly held conviction that universities can rely on their research reputation is being counterbalanced by an equally strong awareness that the 'student experience' matters: a poor showing in NSS scores could lead to a negative reputational effect.

The recommendation in the 2011 Higher Education White Paper that universities publish "anonymised information for prospective and existing students about the teaching qualifications, fellowships and expertise of their teaching staff" (BIS 2011, p. 9) has been received and responded to variously across the research-intensive sector. These data are expected to be published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) in due course, however, and therefore are likely to play into future league tables and other reputational markers. The varying institutional

responses to the value of teaching qualifications, including those accredited against the UKPSF, are examined in Section 2.6.

2.3. The internal contexts of research-intensive universities

Within universities, top-down and bottom-up pressures can serve both as facilitating and constraining factors when it comes to raising the esteem of education in academic career structures. There are several layers to this discussion, including:

- > the move to raise the profile of 'teaching and learning' alongside research (for some with the goal of achieving full parity of esteem), and how this is being operationalised in practice in relation to career pathways, reward and recognition structures;
- > the ways in which these changes are being perceived by heads of department and other university staff.

Both top-down and bottom-up pressures can affect the movement from shifts in policy on paper to shifts in implementation in practice.

Top-down pressures and the key role of leadership

Strong and unified leadership, with a clear vision coming from the head of the institution, the lead on education (PVC Education or equivalent role) and other key leaders, is considered to be critical to making the case for and effecting a process of institutional change. The scope of these roles depends in part on the organisational structure of the particular institution, and is reinforced by university governance structures. Institutional change is a multi-layered process, which involves embedding a more privileged place for education in the university through the introduction of new career pathways and through the detailed elaboration of education-related promotions criteria.

The degree of influence and opportunity experienced by PVCs Education and others leading on the educational mission appears to vary across institutions. Some have seen the strengthening of their position:

Three years ago we used to have a PVC for Education ... but [then] it was quite a titular sort of post.
(PVC2.4)

PVCs for education can find their room for manoeuvre restricted when they lead within highly devolved institutions and have limited access to budgets. Their organisational structures do not always enable them to underpin policy changes with appropriate funding:

All of the money that comes in on education is direct income, which goes out to the departments ... I have all these levers and they are not joined to anything. (PVC3.4)

This particular PVC described how the situation in her/his institution had been further exacerbated when certain areas of what might be construed as the broader academic role had been "professionalised", and therefore "became identified as indirect costs on education" (PVC3.4).

Yet it is evident from our interview data that in a period of embedding new approaches, such as those related to the reward and recognition of education and education leadership, the role of key, high profile individuals is paramount. Promising new directions can be reversed by new appointments at senior level, or taken forward productively. Participants typically express a keen desire to establish genuine 'parity of esteem' between education and research, and have a strong sense that clarity of vision regarding the central place of education in the institution is crucial. Where a strong, unified message from the institutional leaders is lacking, it becomes much harder to embark on and embed processes of institutional change, as one Head of Department noted:

I don't really get what the big picture is. It's not enough to say 'improve NSS scores', that should be the by-product of whatever the big idea is. I was on [the governing body] for three years and I didn't get it there either. (HOD1.17)

Our data suggest that a consistently articulated understanding that education really is *as* important as research is still some way off, as suggested by this anecdote from a Head of Education Development:

[A senior academic colleague] sat on a panel [at an event] for new people in the institution. And one question was, 'How do I balance all of these commitments? You want me ... to be internationally published, you want me to be this, you want that ... how do you balance it?' She said, 'If you've got to let anything drop, let your teaching drop.' (HEDG1.3)

There were also a number of suggestions that those who focus on education, rather than research, are typically less highly regarded within a department:

[They] have to fight against ... the stigma of being thought to be doing something that can reflect less well on them, because it's seen as a subordinate activity to research. And that is a real kind of chronic institutional problem, I would say. (PVC7.7)

The experience of contradictory messages evident from our data is backed up by recent studies (Skelton 2012; Graham 2015). What can be done to change this culture? Repeated references are made to the importance of there being visible and consistent support by senior institutional leaders (Vice Chancellors, PVCs, Deans and equivalent) for the value of education to the institutional mission:

It's terribly important who you have at the top of the institution and what kind of lead they're giving on that ... And I think statements [in strong support of research-based education] make a massive difference to an institution – a massive difference. (PVC7.10)

Leadership from the [most senior leader] is really key. And ... that won't be hands-on, but it will be a very clear signaling. (PVC9.3)

This clarity of message needs then to be promoted equally by heads of faculty, school, institute or department:

Faculty [heads] are absolutely critical for this agenda, because they are the people sending the messages within their own Faculty. (PVC8.5)

If the Head of School is very, very, research orientated I think that can make people feel that the education doesn't quite get to the top table as much as it should. (PVC2.7)

Communications about the value of education need to be clear and persistent. PVCs are typically working to achieve this:

The myth spaces will fill with any old stuff and nonsense, so you have to be really clear about [the message]: This is what we value. (PVC4.13)

We've made a strategic commitment: education and research are our key missions, and so we have to make sure we recognise that. That will be reiterated in our new [institutional] strategy, that ... we value them both equally. There's still a lot of, "We don't really believe that, we don't really believe that." Yes, but you don't turn a tank[er] around overnight. You know, and you've got to be consistent with this message. (PVC4.2)

But the new message is not seen by some to be fully articulated:

In terms of what we reward and recognise – you know, what counts as teaching excellence – are we looking for research and scholarship, stellar classroom practice, are we looking for some sort of institutional leadership role? All of those things are in the mix formally in the criteria, and I don't think we have an institutional position on what we prioritise or how we expect those to fit together. (HED2.11)

Heads of Department in our study typically articulated a sense that while progress is being made, there is a way to go before education really is valued as being on a par with research:

I think at my institute we have tried rather hard in the last maybe three years to try and bridge the divide. And I think while you make small leaps in it, it's just not... There's always going to be a big divide between education and research, unless something fundamental changes. (HOD4.2)

Because of the very highly devolved organisational structures in many research-intensive universities, communication is a particular challenge. Local messages and myths can have a strong hold. Local leaders, who are likely to share disciplinary-related cultural bearings with staff within their group, can have a significant role in promoting or contradicting the message that teaching and education leadership are core to the academic mission and identity. These lived experiences of contradictory messages and a shared sense of the vital importance of consistent messages and practices are echoed in other recent studies. Graham's report on behalf of the Royal

Academy of Engineering (Graham 2015) makes the point particularly clearly that there can be a significant disjuncture between the intentions and directions of the leadership and the lived experiences of individuals in departments.

In conclusion, clarity of values and consistent messaging from senior post-holders are seen as key to developing greater parity of esteem for education and research, and to ensuring that universities maximise the quality and distinctive richness of their educational provision. This may imply the need for individual institutions and their mission group to consider more effective ways of articulating academic prestige and identity in the modern era – this is discussed further in 2.4 – but it also suggests that it is vital for the job roles, nomenclature and reward processes themselves to reflect clear institutional priorities.

Bottom-up pressures: junior staff seeking out development opportunities and concomitant recognition

A number of participants in our study underlined 'bottom-up' pressures on the reward and recognition system. These come from academic staff who already invest considerable time and energy in education, for reasons ranging from personal interests and commitment to more instrumental pressures, and who therefore feel that investment of time and resources need to be appropriately recognised and rewarded. One PVC noted a regularly heard comment:

"I won't put more effort into teaching unless it's going to count towards promotion" ... Part of a larger change process around teaching and learning ... was really driven by our belief that staff wouldn't put in energy unless there was a reward. (PVC10.3)

While recognising that it is absolutely imperative for the sustainability of the institution, another PVC highlighted a tension faced in incentivising faculty to invest in education where there is already good 'student placement performance' in core subjects (PVC3.2). A number of Heads of Department interviewed also expressed a clear tension in asking academic staff to invest in education, when this is not adequately rewarded through promotion criteria. This course of action, they argued, may ultimately harm their colleagues' careers (HOD1.2-3) and even undermine their and the institution's competitiveness in the international marketplace by distracting academics from research (HOD2.2). As we can see, the crosscurrents of pressures are multiple and contradictory, causing tensions for both departments and individuals at different stages of their careers.

Organisational structure and institutional processes facilitating or hindering change

It is evident that organisational structures have been important in carrying through a shift in emphasis in the raising of the importance of the education agenda in higher education institutions. These include the degree of centralisation or devolution and the extent to which there are regular meetings, whereby key stakeholders across the institution can contribute to, communicate and implement new policies. The more devolved and complex the institutional structure, the more difficult it becomes to ensure that policy changes are translated into effective actions right across the institution. Ensuring transparency and equity is even more challenging. We noted a wide variety of organisational and management structures, variable lines of authority and accountability, and often high levels of devolution to sub-groupings, across the Russell Group institutions. A number of PVCs highlighted institutional constraints that hindered or slowed the process of change:

Most of our academic governance is structurally centred around [PVCs] and the Dean, so we just don't tend to see many Heads of Department at institution-wide events. (PVC1.4)

Heads of Department are also often seen as "gatekeepers to the promotions process" (PVC1.4). Insufficient understanding of the shifts in university policy towards rewarding and recognising education was seen as a key element of what has been described as "blocking behaviour":

There can be people who are line managers who have not had enough experience of the teaching side to appreciate how to support people who want to go in that direction. (PVC2.6)

Heads of Department are likely to have been acculturated in their roles as academics in research-intensive universities and to have internalised the overwhelming focus on research that has characterised these institutions. Not surprisingly this is likely to influence the steer they give to junior colleagues about the relative prioritisation of research and education in career progression. However, Heads of Departments are also often actively trying to negotiate, and being frustrated by, the set of apparently contradictory priorities already outlined.

Our data suggest that an additional layer of resistance may lie at the level of individual academics who have never really seen education as a fundamental part of their role:

We do have a number of academics who never really saw it as in their job description to be very education focused, who probably had conversations when they were hired to the effect that you can live [out of town] and come in one day a week. (PVC9.4)

However, our focus groups with Heads of Department show that many of them and their colleagues are very genuinely committed to education, and both PVCs and Heads of Department highlight shortcomings in organisation and infrastructure which constrain progress on in relation to education. They refer, for example, to underinvestment in estate, information technology and student support systems:

There's a big piece that has to do with the need for catch-up investment in student facing frontline services. (PVC9.5)

This in turn can lead to a devaluing of education as an area of activity: if it is not seen to be worth investing in by an institution, why should the individual invest his or her time? In many Russell Group institutions, however, there has been substantial investment in education-related infrastructure in recent years; again, it is a mixed picture.

To sum up, academics across the institution, from their different positions and perspectives, see a great deal of will to provide high quality education and to reward those who make this a reality. However, disjunctures in communication, processes and infrastructure sustain the traditional culture of ascribing more prestige to research than to education, and continue to act as barriers to change.

Recommendation 1

We recommend that senior management teams in research-intensive institutions (i) develop a credible and persuasive narrative regarding the importance of education to the institutional mission, in the context of competing drivers for change (ii) ensure that this narrative is reiterated consistently to internal and external audiences and (iii) use the narrative explicitly to inform and shape changes to reward and recognition processes.

2.4. Job families, career structures and academic identity

Institutions have been following different approaches and nomenclatures in terms of academic job families. Again the number of variables is considerable, and we attempt to capture this diversity here by first looking at the different ways in which 'job families' are named, and then by addressing the diverse ways in which staff are promoted through those job families.

The job families

'Academic' job families and role profiles are variously constituted across institutions in the Russell Group. Drawing on Parker (2008), Gunn and Fisk note a range of different roles across the wider sector which involve teaching. These include:

- > the all-rounder, judged equally in three categories (research, teaching, administration);
- > the all-rounder with a specialism (minimum performance in all areas with excellence in one or two);
- > the specialist (excellence in one or two areas);
- > the well-rounded teacher (excellence in teaching, satisfactory performance in other categories);
- > the researcher (with other areas of excellence taken into account);
- the pure researcher (for whom the possibilities of demonstrating large-scale teaching excellence is curtailed by the limited time spent with students). (Gunn and Fisk 2013, p. 11)

Academic posts in Russell Group institutions cater for this range in different ways. They may be constituted as a single 'academic' job family or academic staff role, which includes research, teaching and other activities (e.g. 'Service', 'Citizenship' (Durham University), 'Management/Administration' (Imperial College London) and 'General Contribution' (University of Cambridge)). Alternatively, they may comprise three job families, with a core academic role (as above) and two other job families – an education-focused path and a research-focused path.

In some institutions, there is a quite separate education-focused (or 'teaching only' pathway) which is deemed to be part of professional services, although at least one institution is looking at changing this status in the near future, and the University of Exeter has already brought staff who were previously on Teaching Fellow contracts into the academic 'lecturer' fold. Exeter continues to distinguish, however, between academic pathways by using

the titles Lecturer (Education and Research) and Lecturer (Education and Scholarship). Contrasts between approaches are seen in the following tables, which are illustrative of similarities as well as differences.

Promotion pathways

Table 2: Example A			
Profile level/Grade	Academic career pathway		
	Teaching and research	Teaching	Research
10	Professor	Professor	Professor
9	Senior Lecturer / Reader	Senior Lecturer	Senior Research Fellow/ Reader
8	Lecturer	Lecturer	Researcher II
7			Researcher I
6			Research Associate

Table 3: Example B			
Profile level/Grade	Academic career pathway		
	Teaching and research	Teaching	Research
e Grade M	Professor	Professor	Professor
d Grade L	Senior Lecturer > Reader	Senior Teaching Fellow > Reader	Senior Research Fellow > Reader
c Grade K	Lecturer	Teaching Fellow	Research Fellow
b Grade J	Lecturer	Teaching Associate	Research Associate
a Grade I		Teaching Assistant	Research Assistant

Table 4: Example C			
Profile level/Grade	Academic career pathway		
	Teaching and research	Teaching and scholarship	Research
Grade I	Professor	Professor	Professor
Grade H	Associate Professor	Associate Professor	Associate Professor
Grade G	Senior Lecturer	Senior Lecturer	Senior Research Fellow
Grade F	Lecturer	Lecturer	Research Fellow
Grade E	Associate Lecturer	Associate Lecturer	Associate Research Fellow

Table 5: Example D

Profile level/Grade	Academic (Research and teaching)	Professional services (Teaching)	Professional services (Research)
10	Professor* *Promotion from Grade 9 can be awarded on basis of a research-focused <i>or</i> education-focused claim.	N/A	N/A
9	Reader/Senior Lecturer	Principal Teaching Fellow	Principal Research Fellow
8	Lecturer 2	Senior Teaching Fellow	Senior Researcher Fellow
7	Lecturer 1	Teaching Fellow	Research Fellow

As we can see from just these four examples, there are some comparable career patterns but also some different routes and nomenclatures for what might be seen as core academic work.

Another recent development in the sector is the switch by two research-intensive institutions (London School of Economics and Political Science and the University of Warwick) to a US-style nomenclature for research and education to track academic staff, with a change to the job titles Assistant Professor, Associate Professor and Professor. This appears, in large part, to be a response to the increased internationalisation of the higher education landscape. However, as this nomenclature does not extend to education-focused pathways, in the short term, it may serve to entrench perceived divides between different career paths.

The majority of research-intensive universities now have three parallel job pathways with a significant proportion of academic staff employed in 'research and education' roles, but with parallel 'education and scholarship' and research pathways. One institution has four main job families: 'Academic', 'Research', 'Academic Related', and 'Assistant'; another also retains the term 'Academic-Related', which covers a variety of roles, including research posts.

Twenty of the 24 Russell Group institutions have introduced a full professorial grade for education-focused staff. This grade can be reached either through the traditional, 'dual focus' academic route or through a distinctive education-focused pathway, or both. In some cases there is permeability across the pathways; in other words, staff who meet the necessary criteria can cross from one route to another at different promotion points. It would appear to be more straightforward, however, to move from a research and education pathway to an education-focused route than *vice versa*.

Institutions may also have specialist teaching roles, for example, for language teaching and for sessional teachers, which are deemed 'professional'. Research-focused roles² held by post-doctoral researchers may or may not be termed 'academic' in the HR nomenclature. One London institution has an 'academic' role restricted to lecturers who both teach and research; its teaching fellows and researchers are on professional services contracts. However, its teaching fellows can gain promotion (Teaching Fellow (TF); Senior Teaching Fellow; Principal Teaching Fellow) and the institution is currently consulting on the introduction of a professorial grade for TFs. Another London institution also employs Teaching Fellows, but with no apparent promotion pathway; again, TFs are considered to be members of professional services. A number of institutions allow for 'dual focus' academics to be promoted to full Professor, however, through focusing on education and education leadership or management rather than (or as well as) research.

Education-focused staff: an equitable ecosystem?

Despite the variety of job families and promotion structures in evidence across these research-intensive universities, our data show that there are strong, shared values with respect to the need for roles and structures to form a flexible, equitable ecosystem, which not only rewards individuals appropriately but also builds motivated,

² Contributors to our study suggested that 'research only' staff experience barriers to reward and promotion which mirror those experienced by 'teaching only' staff; individuals who undertake both activities simultaneously are deemed to have advantageous terms of employment

effective departments and teams which succeed in producing the highest quality research *and* the highest quality education. There is wide recognition that traditional role structures have not always been fair to some groups, have not been flexible enough to capture different kinds of contribution, and have not always reflected the particularity of contexts within which individuals are working.

We see in the data a shared sense that old structures and related job role descriptors and criteria for promotion need to change so that there is more flexibility, both for individuals and for the institution:

It's not one size fits all. It's more of ... an ecosystem, isn't it? ... It's very important to recognise that people contribute in different ways, at different times in their career. (PVC6.6)

A key issue is the different ways in which academic work is characterised in relation to 'teaching only' or, as we refer to them here, 'education-focused' roles. As we have seen, in some institutions, the term 'academic' is applied to staff who predominantly teach and who are not, officially at least, actively researching, as well as to researcher educators, who form the majority of the 'teaching' workforce. In other institutions, the 'academic' category is used only for these staff who *both* research and teach, and education-focused staff may be categorised as professional rather than academic. This is counter to the categorisation by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA 2015), which refers explicitly to 'teaching only' staff within the 'academic' category.

Further complications arise from the fact that so-called 'teaching only' contracts come in various guises. Some education-focused staff are contributing core activity that mirrors closely the educational contribution of 'academics', even where they are not described as academics, and can reach the most senior levels. They have open-ended contracts and may even be engaging in research and publishing, although this may be in their own time:

The language teachers are first rate; they are educators ... Many of them are research active, but we don't count it because we don't have an academic department that they could come under. (PVC3.6)

Some educators are brought in predominantly for their professional expertise drawn from another field, for example, in Law, Medicine, or Teacher Education. Such staff may be on standard academic contracts, or they may be on 'Teaching Fellow' contracts (or similar), which in turn may or may not be categorised as 'academic'.

At the most senior levels, for example in Medicine, nationally recognised and even world-leading professional expertise can be vital for senior leadership posts in the unit, and the flexibility to appoint staff who bring research expertise, professional expertise *and* educational expertise – or some combination from the three – is seen as invaluable. However, this degree of flexibility does not appear to apply consistently to professional areas; one such area is in the field of academic practice itself, whose leading experts often undertake research but are sometimes, although not always, employed as professional rather than academic staff, even when they both teach and research. Layer upon layer of such contractual and conceptual complexity can only hinder consistency of message regarding the worth of education to the institution and mission group.

Education-focused staff appear to be the most frustrated with respect to promotion and recognition, and in some cases there are no perceived opportunities for promotion at all:

If you're a teaching fellow you have no promotion prospects whatsoever. There is no 'senior' or anything like that, you're just a teaching fellow ... on the professional services grades. Because in professional services you can't be promoted; we don't have any promotion. (HED1.17)

We have three different types of academic staff here, so we have academic staff, we have teaching fellows and we have research fellows ... And I think our teaching fellows felt the most disadvantaged by the current promotion system. (PVC1.1)

In other cases, where there is a teaching fellow career pathway, there remains doubt about the status of TFs relative to their 'academic' colleagues. Our data suggest that in some contexts there have been mixed feelings about education-focused roles among 'dual focus' academics, as this anecdote from a Head of Education Development illustrates:

So in one department there was two or three years ago a fairly heated ... debate on whether they should even have teaching fellows. Because there were a significant number of academics who thought teaching fellows would end up being failed academics, and people who couldn't cut it, you know, by the normal ways of measuring things in academia. Those people didn't win, and they weren't ... violently against it, they were really arguing for quality. But they were misunderstanding what was going on, I think. And this was very much within the department ... And they ended up recruiting and appointing three teaching fellows initially who all turned out to be stupendously good. And even the people that were arguing against it could see straight away that these weren't in any way second-class academics; they were simply academics with a different focus. (HED1.12)

Even where staff who are on education-focused contracts are considered to be academics, they can still see themselves as less valued:

They're in a category of their own and they are regarded as academic, but I think they regard themselves as less valued in that role. (PVC10.7)

The introduction of a single academic pathway, which brings into the 'academic' fold all those who teach, those who research, and those who do both, is seen as one solution to this 'second class citizen' perception. Alternatively there could be greater permeability between parallel pathways, so that even where there are separately construed pathways for research-focused staff, for 'dual focus' researcher educators, and for education-focused staff, individuals may be able to move across from one pathway to another where certain conditions are met.

A principle shared by many of the participants in our study is that as institutions move forward there needs to be more nuanced role descriptors which enable individuals to play to their strengths and develop different areas of emphasis over time:

I would certainly bring in promotion structures that enabled people within a career at this institution to move from one kind of post to another. (PVC7.8)

On the whole we don't hire people on an academic contract who are teaching-led. But they maybe become teaching-led as their career develops – it's a long career. (PVC9.7)

A more ambitious suggestion for enhancing current processes is to consider advantageous rather than disadvantageous promotion opportunities for education-focused staff:

Maybe [we need] ways of looking at grades of appointment, and grades of promotion. So not necessarily the [job] title, but ... within a particular category of appointment, [there] may be more rapid movement up the salary spine based on quality of teaching and engagement with education. I think it's going to be those more subtle, more nuanced reflections. (PVC5.10)

The vision here, shared by many contributors to our study, is certainly for more permeability between roles and more imaginative ways of ensuring that staff who contribute effectively to the educational mission are rewarded appropriately, so that they are increasingly motivated:

I'd like to see a greater number of colleagues feel that they've got the confidence that our gifted educators can commit, you know, not all but a large part of their career to educating students, and know that it was going to be rewarded. (PVC1.7)

[There needs to be] an even greater focus on quality of teaching being rewarded, and finding perhaps some innovative ways to reward teaching. (PVC5.10)

The need to reward contributions to education more fairly applies not only to those on roles designated as 'teaching only', such as Teaching Fellows or University Teachers, but to staff who both research and teach, particularly where the latter develop a predominant interest in and talent for teaching and educational leadership and want to make this their main focus at a given stage in their career. Most institutions now allow those defined as academic staff to gain promotion to full professor through their impact on education, but as we will see (2.5) the criteria for gaining this level of recognition are not always fully developed, clearly understood throughout the institution or (thought to be) fairly interpreted by promotions panels.

There is clearly an issue of balancing the 'twin pillars' of research and education and of ensuring that, notwithstanding the growing importance of education, research capacity is maintained and enhanced. Research-intensive institutions will not wish to do anything to academic roles that will undermine their performance in the

Research Excellence Framework. In this regard, one PVC expressed reticence about letting the number of education-focused staff rise:

Because, you know, if you want to get from say 800 staff in the REF to 1000, employing staff who you can't submit [any research] is not ... very logical really. (PVC6.5)

The argument here is that creating too many education-focused or 'teaching only' roles will diminish research capacity. Clearly some kind of judgment needs to be made in terms of getting the balance between research and education right, whether that is within the profile of an individual's contract and workload allocation or across an institution, department or team, so that institutions excel in both areas.

Another consideration, however, is whether maintaining separate pathways for those focused on education is simply counter-productive, damaging the esteem of a whole group of staff:

We've got to think of a way of trying to create those elite but education-related roles in a way that isn't self-undermining. So you know having separate career paths, you've got to be really careful that they're not A and B (PVC3.8)

The relationship between education-focused staff and the 'academic' body is evidently problematic. The difference between the definition of academic in some Russell Group institutions and the HESA (2015) definition is clearly an anomaly that would benefit from being looked at in more detail by institutions.

Academic identity

Literature addressing the topic of academic identity explores the complex issues of the relationship between academics' self-concept and the power relationships played out in university settings. Archer notes that:

'becoming' an academic is not smooth, straightforward, linear or automatic, but can also involve conflict and instances of inauthenticity, marginalization and exclusion. (Archer 2008, p. 387)

Clegg argues that identity should be "understood not as a fixed property, but as part of the lived complexity of a person's project" and that academics look to create spaces in which they can exercise "principled personal autonomy and agency" (Clegg 2008, p. 329).

The literature suggests that academics can have split identities (Winter 2009), for example, in relation to the different cultural bearings of their subject discipline(s) and their current institution, or with respect to a perceived tension between so-called 'performativity' culture and 'academic freedom'. Drawing on Bourdieu, Archer describes the ways in which:

questions of authenticity and legitimacy are central to the formation of social relations within the academy – with individuals and groups competing to ensure that their particular interests, characteristics and identities are accorded recognition and value. (Archer 2008, p. 386)

Our data suggest that individuals are acutely aware of power relationships and hierarchies of prestige, and that education-focused staff on 'dual focus' academic contracts feel, sometimes very deeply, a sense of inferiority. These challenges are magnified for teaching staff who are not included in the academic group, but employed on a professional services contract, where they may be described as 'administrative' or even 'support' staff. Again language is key:

'Teaching Fellow' carries a kind of packhorse, 'covering somebody else's research leave' connotation. So we've had a bit of a debate about the terminology. (HED2.12)

I don't know whether that's the official terminology, 'teaching focused' ... but that's one step ahead of where we are, [because we have] what is called a 'teaching only' route – and that creates quite a lot of grumpiness. (HED2.11)

The issue is not just one of perceived lack of respect. It is also about not having opportunities to develop one's own evidence-based practice:

Because one of the issues is that they're not entitled to research leave, and therefore even in terms of updating your teaching materials or doing pedagogic research, keeping up with developments, at the moment they don't get that time off. (HED2.14)

The issue that we have is that some [Teaching Fellows] come from a research background and they want to continue their research, and they do that in their own time ... We promote the view that they are academics. They don't necessarily see themselves as academics, but not because of their own perception, but because of perceptions in the departments – sometimes there's a strong sense that there is that clear split. (HED2.13)

The sense of being deemed to be 'less than an academic', when individuals are highly qualified subject experts and passionately dedicated to student education, is deeply felt. The following exchange from one focus group with Heads of Education Development is illustrative:

Speaker 1: I have heard the phrase 'real academic' used.

Speaker 3: Yeah, exactly ... I lead the teaching fellows' forum, and they're incredibly engaged, but one of the discussions [was about] the way they introduced themselves. They say, "I'm not a real academic, I'm a teaching fellow." (HED2.14)

Educators and education leaders in higher education want others to see them, and want to be able to see themselves, as 'real' academics. Until this shift happens, it seems unlikely that they will be rewarded equitably in comparison with research-focused or dual focus academics.

To summarise, it is clear that the participants in our study share a vision for a more flexible ecosystem that, while maintaining the traditions of academic excellence, offers greater recognition of education and of those who lead on the educational mission. It is also evident that contradictory messages arise from confusion – across the research-intensive sector as a whole, if not necessarily within a single institution, although there is also evidence of this – about whether those focusing on the educational mission and not (officially) researching are deemed to be academics or not, and whether they can legitimately be afforded the esteem, career and leadership opportunities available to research-focused academics. As one PVC notes:

Actually at the cusp I suppose we're looking at the big questions, including the very nature of lectureships. (PVC5.2)

We pick up the challenge of these 'big questions' in Section 3.

Recommendation 2

We recommend that research-intensive institutions review their 'job families' to ensure that all staff with substantive posts as teachers and/or education leaders are (i) defined as academic, in line with the HESA definition, and (ii) afforded opportunities to rise to the most senior posts on the basis of the strength and scope of their contribution to the institution's educational mission.

If these recommendations cannot be effected, a clear rationale should be given to staff explaining why this is so, and parallel markers of esteem and opportunities for promotion should be developed.

2.5. Promotion criteria, processes and equality of opportunity

Many institutions have been reviewing their promotion criteria and esteem indicators to reflect the growing centrality of education and education leadership to institutional missions (Locke 2014). Cashmore *et al.* (2009, 2013) have explored the evolution of promotion criteria for 'teaching and learning' activity at institutions across the higher education sector in the United Kingdom. In 2009 they noted that of the 15 Russell Group universities that took part in their survey, five had no significant mention of teaching and learning in their promotion policies, five had significant mention of teaching and learning within them, and a further five had explicit criteria. Their 2013 study, however, which was based on a 2011 survey of university websites, showed a significant shift. Only one university (of the 17 that had information on their websites) had no significant mention of teaching and learning, one having significant mention and 13 having explicit promotions criteria linked to teaching and learning (Cashmore *et al.* 2013, p. 13).

Our data suggest that typically institutions are seeking a transparent process, both through clearly worded, inclusive criteria and fair selection processes, which provide equality of opportunity for all staff. At the same time there is considerable variety in how far research-intensive institutions have moved along the path of shifting patterns of reward and recognition. In some institutions, variable practices appear to operate across disciplinary areas.

There appears to have been a certain amount of struggle in the movement towards articulating excellence in teaching, and some institutions have undertaken benchmarking exercises in this area, both with other Russell Group institutions and internationally, for example, drawing from practices in Australia and the United States. Developing appropriate promotion criteria is a challenge for the higher education sector internationally, however, and frustration has been expressed at the slow progress made in making changes (Crook 2014). A recent study, *Promoting Teaching*, highlights the need for promotion panels to consider an individual's "scope of activity" and their "sphere of influence", as well as the "source of evidence" for their effectiveness in relation to their educational contribution (HEA 2013, p. 3). The international consortium recommended five key areas for inclusion in promotion criteria:

Table 6: Figure drawn from *Promoting Teaching: Making Evidence Count* (HEA 2013, p. 5)

Criteria	Examples
Professional learning	Participating in teaching-related workshops and seminars; obtaining (or furthering) teaching qualifications
Student engagement	Includes face-to-face teaching in classrooms; teaching by distance and online; providing support and feedback; research supervision
Curriculum development	Resources for courses; curriculum review, design and innovation; evaluation and alignment to standards
Research and scholarship	Presentations, grants, and publications
Leadership and collaboration	Mentorship, governance, peer review, course accreditation

Across the research-intensive institutions represented in our study, promotion criteria and means of evidencing them differ between and sometimes even within institutions. However, all institutions do have established and published criteria, and there is a common expectation that an individual needs to evidence an appropriate range of contributions to the institutional mission:

So there is a mix ... there's always expected to be a mix of your educational excellence and your scholarship, research excellence. That's obviously, as you can imagine, on a distribution curve – it varies. (PVC4.1)

For most staff ... what they want is to feel that a mixed mode application [including] learning and teaching [would] count. (PVC10.3)

Shared values are expressed in our study with respect to ensuring that criteria are now re-balanced to reflect more equitably the dual importance of education and research:

We teach and do research, but we do both. None of us are 'research only' institutions ... If we could recognise the two as of equal importance, the two pillars that hold up the institution, I would be very happy. (PVC3.10)

Around these 'two pillars', however, is an increasing number of related areas of focus; these include public and global engagement, knowledge transfer and enterprise, as well as 'citizenship' or contribution to the institutional community. The promotion criteria need, therefore, to include a wide spectrum of areas of activity, and to accommodate those which are innovative and exceptional. For some institutions, this has meant allowing more flexibility with the application of existing criteria, but for others a new approach has been adopted. One institution, for example, has developed promotion exemplars rather than fixed sets of criteria:

We started with the intention of developing a rubric ... [But] what we did was we created a set of exemplars, and we said, 'We're looking for people who have some of these, but if you have a new [sphere of activity] that we haven't thought of, submit that, and if we rate it we'll [reward] it.' So the idea was we didn't need something finished. (PVC10.2)

Another institution plans to introduce a flexible 'impact framework', whereby individuals can develop their own evidence-based narrative, showing how they have contributed to the institutional mission:

And what I want to do is, I want to develop something which in my mind I'm calling an impact framework, [with a view to providing] colleagues with a way of measuring and demonstrating their impact at a particular given level. (PVC1.6)

A third has also opted for a narrative approach:

Looking at the learning and teaching criteria, I think we're in danger of putting absolutely everything in there and it becoming, you know, too much of a sort of a checklist that people would be measured against: 'Oh, you've only got 14 of the 18, therefore you haven't made it'. And so we've kind of moved back and [to the more] general and generic, so that they can capture the breadth of the different types of metrics and different types of evidence that people are putting forward. (PVC8.7)

These more holistic approaches have the merit of taking into account the complexity of 'teaching' in the modern era:

We're supposed to be getting away from [just] classroom performance. I'd really like us to be thinking about things like programme design and what happens outside the classroom, and other ways in which we support students' development, rather than just being a charismatic performer ... If [only] we could somehow encourage people to think more holistically about what being a teacher involves. (HED2.25)

They may also help to accommodate the variation in needs between different academic disciplines. A number of informants in our study highlight particular areas such as law, medicine, and teacher education where, as we have seen, university educators may be employed for their professional expertise rather than for their research profile, although it may be for both. Here promotion criteria need to be broadly configured as principles of contribution or perhaps with illustrative criteria, so that any individual, even one from a highly atypical context, can make a case for promotion and be rewarded appropriately and equitably by their peers. As one of our heads of department noted:

The idea that ... the fundamental point is that as a department and as a school we've got to excel collectively in teaching and research, both ... that doesn't mean every single person should be expected to do so, but there should be a collective effort and everybody should play to their strengths. (HOD1.3)

Promotion panels

Another important caveat from the data, as noted above, is that while published criteria and inclusive ways of presenting claims aligned to them are necessary and helpful, there must be consistency in the ways in which the criteria are communicated and interpreted throughout the institution. This includes, crucially, the use and application of criteria by promotion panels, and an understanding of what constitutes a reasonable interpretation of education-related evidence in an individual's claim for promotion:

I think on the education side we can get a bit bogged down ... with the nature of evidence and analysis and justification. And it gets very detailed, in a way that on the research side sometimes it isn't. (PVC6.11)

A vital element of the promotion process is the constitution of promotions panels, along with the guidance provided for them to ensure that judgments are equitably based on evidence that reflects the institution's priorities for research, education and other dimensions of contribution. Equitable judgments can be particularly problematic, or may be seen to be so, when the panels are made up wholly by staff who have gained their own seniority predominantly through research-focused 'metrics':

Now what is interesting is those committees would not necessarily be determined on the basis of particular proficiency in teaching and learning – there would be an assumption ... because the people on those committees will have either gone through the promotion system or come in to a named chair – that they would have sufficient engagement with teaching and learning. (PVC5.8)

I wonder if part of that problem is the fact that the people who are in leadership roles ... are just not *au fait* enough with the [promotion] system, with how it works [with respect to education criteria], and therefore that does not get cascaded down to the rest of the educators? (HOD4.5)

A more mixed constitution of expertise is indicated, together with better guidance for panels and also for external assessors and referees on the qualities being sought by the institution in the current era:

And I suppose you know to a large extent the criteria on which we promote individuals should be very much aligned to our institutional strategy and mission. You know and those things are likely ... probably not at the high level, but at a lower level to vary. And therefore it's probably important for an individual who is acting as an external assessor to be very clear about what the drivers and what the ambitions of the institution are. (PVC8.5)

Some Heads of Department interviewed expressed doubts about the fairness of decision-making by panels comprising only senior academics, even where criteria have been updated:

Speaker 4: The [senior academics on the panel] are still making a completely autocratic decision, that's the problem. Because you can change the criteria as much as you like and they'll still say, 'No, I don't fancy that one'. Yeah, so you would have to have a different panel ... Where are the professional services people on that panel, and what kind of voting power do they have? Where is the [PVC Education] and what voting power does [s/he] have? ... So you can change criteria, but not behaviours.

Speaker 3: And I think when you look at ... all businesses there's a clear process with a clear set of criteria – it should be transparent. Why are we having a different system that's not transparent, with no feedback? (HOD4.16)

Another participant notes that some senior staff appear to be unclear themselves:

Last year when I asked about going for senior promotion [on the basis of educational contribution] nobody knew how to do that. ... The head of the [unit] ... confessed they had no idea. (HOD4.5)

One head of department tells a story of how three people in his department went for promotion at the same time with "excellent CVs": he himself, with an "enterprise-strong" application; a colleague strong on grant income and publications; and a second colleague who "runs a quite spectacularly successful Masters course, bringing in well over £3 million a year." The head of department expresses frustration that the education-focused colleague was the only one to miss out on promotion:

He didn't get it. So in this institution, out of the three of us, the one who didn't get it was by far and away the most important person. Because it's not just the income, it's the fact that that income represents god knows how many individuals who come to this place to be damned impressed, and most of them leave here lifelong members of the [institutional] family, because of the dedication and commitment that this person has shown. (HOD4.9)

Another head of department told of how a number of people who had been promoted through the education-focused route had been asked to talk to the department about how they had achieved this:

And they all stood up and said, 'It's a mystery to me what happened really. Some kind of smoke and mirrors happened and I got the post.' Which was actually helpful, because it meant that there was no point in having a strategy [for promotion], you just have to keep trying. (HOD4.15)

Others note the potential for discrimination against anyone who is not already in the elite 'club':

Speaker 4: And if you change the criteria, you bring new people into the club, and what chaos might they cause in the club?

Speaker 3: Exactly.

Speaker 4: Because you might find educators aren't the right kind of club members.

Speaker 3: I strongly echo that, yeah.

Speaker 4: And people who work in enterprise might be even worse!

Speaker 3: Yeah, precisely ... 'Good God, they're not like us!' (HOD4.21-22)

We reproduce this exchange in full because it conveys the passion and frustration felt by some participants in our study. Yet perspectives are very mixed – some are happy with internal promotion processes as they stand in their institution:

I don't think there's any discrimination. I mean, we'd argue with some of the criteria, but they're transparent, surely? (HOD5.4)

The uncertainty and lack of clarity among most of our participants about exactly how promotions processes worked and how decision-making happened, however, even where criteria have been improved, was evident. It is clear that institutions have work to do to ensure that processes are, and are perceived to be, equitable and fit for purpose, especially for those looking for promotion predominantly through their contribution to education.

Some universities, including Birmingham³ and Sheffield⁴, have developed and published a set of academic expectations, which illustrate more fully the scope of activity expected of those in academic roles. These comprehensive statements may help with exemplifying the rich range of academic activities valued by the institution, and may have a role in underlining the importance of education-related roles to the institution's academic mission for promotion panels and also for external referees and other stakeholders.

Equality of opportunity

The unequal representation of women and of black and minority ethnic staff in more senior academic roles has been well documented in recent years. This is a complex area for analysis which goes beyond the scope of our present study, but new data provided for us by the UK Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) show that in Russell Group institutions in 2013-2014, 54.2% of education-focused posts were held by women, with 45.8% held by men. By contrast, only 30.3% of 'research and education' posts were held by women, with 69.7% held by men (Table 7).

Table 7: Gender breakdown in academic employment function (excluding atypical contracts) in Russell Groups Universities 2011-201

	2011-2012			2012-2013			2013-2014		
	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	F	M	Total
Academics (%)	27958 40.7	40694 59.3	68652 100	29510 41.1	42359 58.9	71868 100	31832 41.1	45646 58.9	77478 100
Teaching and research (%)	8770 29.8	20641 70.2	29410 100	9046 30.1	21045 69.9	30091 100	9540 30.3	21985 69.7	31525 100
Teaching only (%)	5148 55	4209 44.9	9357 100	5652 54.7	4682 45.3	10334 100	6481 54.2	5483 45.8	11964 100
Research only (%)	13931 46.9	15762 53.1	29693 100	14603 47.1	16415 52.9	31018 100	15622 46.5	17955 53.4	33617 100

SOURCE: HESA DIRECT DATA REQUEST, NOV 2015.

Our new HESA data also show that in Russell Group institutions in 2013-2014, black and minority ethnic (BME) staff undertook 9.3% of education-focused roles but only 8.8% of dual-focus roles (Table 8).

³ The Birmingham Academic: <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/excellence/academic/index.aspx>

⁴ The Sheffield Academic: <https://www.shaf.ac.uk/hr/sheffieldacademic/statement>

Table 8: Breakdown by ethnicity in academic employment function (excluding atypical contracts) in Russell Groups Universities 2011-2014

	2011-2012			2012-2013			2013-2014		
	White	BME	Total	White	BME	Total	White	BME	Total
Academics (%)	53039 77.3	8043 11.7	68652 100	55440 77.1	8467 11.8	71868 100	58485 75.5	9215 11.9	77478 100
Teaching and research (%)	24328 82.7	2486 8.5	29410 100	24769 82.3	2589 8.6	30091 100	25636 81.3	2781 8.8	31525 100
Teaching only (%)	7236 77.3	862 9.2	9357 100	8175 79.1	912 8.8	10334 100	9104 76.1	1119 9.3	11964 100
Research only (%)	21328 71.8	4676 15.7	29693 100	22118 71.3	4940 15.9	31018 100	23412 69.6	5291 15.7	33627 100

Source: HESA direct data request, Nov 2015. ('Unknown' are not included in this table.)

For BME staff, there are very significant challenges with regard both to employment in academic posts generally and to promotion through the grades once employed. Shilliam makes the case that 'British academia remains administratively, normatively, habitually and intellectually 'White'', and that at professorial level the under-representation of BME staff, and of women, is even more significant:

92.39 per cent of professors (15,905) in UK academia are White, and 0.49 per cent (85) are Black, with just 17 of those being women. (Alexander and Arday (eds.) 2015, p. 32)

This under-representation is not only an 'equality of opportunity' issue, it adversely affects the range of perspectives needed to push the edge of knowledge through cutting edge research, as Kahinde Andrews:

The crisis at hand is the chronic under-representation of ethnic minority staff in general and Black (those of African ancestry) in particular. In the UK only 1.1 per cent of British born academic staff are Black, and only 0.4 per cent of British born professors (University and College Union, 2012). This under-representation is more than just a civil rights issue of the Black population being given fair access to employment and promotion. The shortage of Black staff also means that British scholarship is lacking a range of perspectives and therefore knowledge in terms of understanding society and the world we live in. (Alexander and Arday (eds.) 2015, p. 30)

In relation to the issue of reward, the fact that both women and BME staff are more likely to undertake education-focused roles than 'research and education' roles is significant; we know that education-focused staff are remunerated considerably less well than 'dual focus' academics. Locke *et al.* (2016) draw on current HESA data and the results of a forthcoming University and College Union (UCU) survey to show that across the UK higher education sector in 2013-14, 80% of staff on research and education contracts earned more than £42,500, but only 23% of those on education-focused (or 'teaching only') contracts and only 19% of research-only academics earned above this figure. Staff on 'teaching-only' and 'research-only' contracts are also much more likely to be part-time and female (Locke 2014) than those on dual-focus contracts.

The perception that education-focused staff, whether they are on education-only contracts or are focusing (at present) on the education part of their dual portfolio, are seen to be 'second class' is evidenced in our data. As suggested in our discussion of job families above, current nomenclature is seen as unhelpful here, as is the practice in some institutions of excluding education-focused staff from the academic category and its established promotion paths. The need for clear but inclusively nuanced promotion criteria, which value education as much as research, is evident. Balanced representation on promotion panels is also needed, and our interviews with PVCs suggest that while work has already been done to ensure better gender and BME representation on selection and promotion panels and better development of staff in areas such as unconscious and implicit bias (Equality Challenge Unit 2013), there is much more to do. In addition, if panels are made up entirely or very predominantly of academics whose own portfolios and markers of success have been highly research-orientated, it is arguably less likely that judgments about staff whose strengths centre on education will be as balanced or as well informed

as they would be if the panel included education specialists as well as traditional 'dual focus' academics. More research is needed in this important area.

Conclusions

To sum up, a repeated motif in the interviews and focus groups was that of the need for fairness and flexibility in recognising and rewarding contribution in the education domain. Promotion criteria and decision-making processes need to recognise the particularity of an individual's context and also respect diversity of activity at different times in a career. Contributors to our study agreed that excellent individual contributions, appropriately aligned to the institution's academic mission, should be rewarded:

So you know you obviously want [all] staff to be outstanding and to be rewarded ... And if you don't do that you're just not going to have career staff committed to what the institution's doing. (PVC6.5)

Whether institutions elect to use a fixed set of promotion criteria, illustrative criteria, flexible exemplars or an 'impact narrative' approach, the shared goal of creating a more inclusive and importantly more equitable, strength-based system for promotion and reward is one which many contributors to our study want to see implemented. Only through achieving this can institutions ensure that the education they provide for students is of the highest quality.

Recommendations 3 and 4

We recommend that research-intensive institutions review their promotion criteria to ensure that (i) they illustrate accurately the current balance of academic priorities, in line with the institutional mission and (ii) they are fully understood by academics.

We recommend that research-intensive institutions review promotion processes to ensure that (i) promotion panels have a diverse profile, fully inclusive of women and BME staff, (ii) panels represent academic expertise from both the research and education domains, (iii) all panel members are developed to understand issues of unconscious bias, and (iv) cases for promotion can be made by all educators, in any job family, on the basis of the strength of their overall contribution to the institution's mission.

2.6. Professional development, recognition and review

Another widely shared value expressed by participants in our study is to ensure that all staff who teach have opportunities to develop appropriate knowledge, skills and attributes, not only early in their career but also as they become more experienced, and to gain professional recognition for their expertise. This is in line with recent sector literature that underlines the importance of education-related development. A recent European study, for example, looks at the ways in which academics across Europe are being professionalised in relation to their teaching role:

The purpose of educational development (also called academic development, teacher development or teacher training) is to help create learning environments that enhance educational quality. In the absence of educational development, teachers in higher education tend to base their teaching on their own experience as students. In this way, old teaching methods that focus on the teachers' rather than the students' needs and on the subject matter rather than on the transformation of student knowledge perpetuate from generation to generation. (Pleschová *et al.* 2012, p. 9)

Articulating a similar message, the McAleese Report to the European Union presents a number of principles. The author argues that:

- > the preference of research over teaching in defining academic merit needs rebalancing;
- > academic staff are employed not just to teach, but to teach well, to a high professional standard;
- > it is a key responsibility of institutions to ensure their academic staff are well trained and qualified as professional teachers and not just qualified in a particular academic subject;
- > this responsibility extends to ensuring new staff have a teaching qualification or equivalent on entry or have access to credible teacher training courses in the early years of their career;
- > this responsibility extends to providing opportunities for continuous professional career development as a professional teacher and not just as a subject/discipline specific academic. (McAleese 2013, p. 15)

The new study by Locke *et al.* (2016) addresses the complexities of "Meeting the staff development needs of the changing academic workforce", and our data complement Locke's in showing that there is a particular dimension of complexity with respect to education-related professional development within a research-intensive culture. Relying

on senior staff to help develop their more junior colleagues' approaches to education is seen as problematic, in that most senior post-holders have reached seniority because of their research expertise, and many missed out on any formal opportunities to develop their own educational knowledge and approaches.

I think there can be people who are line managers who maybe have not had enough experience of the teaching side to appreciate how to support people who want to go in that direction. *(PVC2.7)*

However, more attention is undoubtedly being paid to the development and support of staff across Russell Group institutions:

We have a very good staff development support system within the institution, but [we are also] actually trying to identify some ... well, more the mentors, but it is the education leaders ... more on the ground, who actually can provide support. Also the ideas for development. *(PVC5.3)*

We increasingly pay... a lot of attention both to early career staff and to researchers – particularly researchers on fixed term contracts ... where you're trying to encourage them to develop as strong a skillset as possible ... So I think in relation to teaching and continuing professional development ... as an institution we're much more alert to that in the sort of 25 to 40 age group. There's a sort of demography. *(PVC7.4)*

While all institutions have provision for staff development, or academic development, with regard to teaching development, significant differences relate to:

1. the degree to which this provision is informed by and mapped to the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) and the extent to which evidence of continuing professional development is required for promotion;
2. the perceived usefulness of an annual 'appraisal', or Professional Development Review.

These two themes are considered below.

The UK Professional Standards Framework in Russell Group institutions

The current UKPSF, developed by a range of stakeholders in UK higher education, including the National Union of Students (NUS) and institutional representatives, was launched by the Higher Education Academy on behalf of the sector in 2011. The four 'Descriptors' of the UKPSF move through four categories of contribution to and achievement in education; that is, in relation to teaching, supporting students' learning and education leadership. They range from the very early career expectations required for Associate Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (Descriptor 1), to full teaching recognition at Fellow level (Descriptor 2), to demonstrating sustained, effective co-ordination and mentorship at Senior Fellow (Descriptor 3), to highly effective strategic leadership in the education domain, both across an institution and externally, at Principal Fellow (Descriptor 4). We reviewed the ways in which Russell Group institutions are currently engaging with the UKPSF in relation to their provision of developmental opportunities for staff who contribute to education.

In the majority of research-intensive institutions, effective individual practice, mapped against Descriptor 2 of the UKPSF, can lead to professional recognition as a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. Professional recognition can be gained either through direct application to the HEA or, increasingly, through an HEA-accredited institutional scheme for continuing professional development (CPD). Institutions offer accredited taught programmes or an accredited flexible CPD scheme, or both.

Table 9: HEA-accredited Taught Developmental Programmes of Study for staff who teach and/or support students' learning (01 10 2015)

Number of Russell Group institutions	Level of taught provision	Successful completion leads to:
2	Descriptor 1 Descriptor 2 Descriptor 3	Associate Fellowship Fellowship Senior Fellowship
13	Descriptor 1 Descriptor 2	Associate Fellowship Fellowship
5	Currently being accredited	Associate Fellowship Fellowship
4	No accredited taught provision	

SOURCE: HIGHER EDUCATION ACADEMY (DIRECT DATA REQUEST) 1 OCTOBER 2015

As we see, the majority of Russell Group Universities have accredited taught programmes. These usually take the form of a Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education or a Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice. Thirteen institutions have programmes accredited to both Descriptor 1 (Associate Fellowship) and Descriptor 2 (Fellowship). Two institutions also have taught accredited provision up to Descriptor 3 (Senior Fellowship). Of the remaining nine institutions, five are currently undergoing accreditation or reaccreditation, with only four offering no taught provision at this time.

In addition, most Russell Group institutions now have HEA-accredited CPD schemes, designed to support staff throughout their careers. This provision is delivered in a range of flexible ways, for example, through seminars whereby staff exchange their experience and approaches. Applications ('claims') for an appropriate category of fellowship, based on effective individual practice and underpinned by related developmental activity, are then submitted and assessed by trained panels of peer assessors. External reviewers, whose role is broadly parallel to that of an external examiner for taught higher education programmes, are typically drawn from other research-intensive institutions, which can foster sharing of good practice across as well as within institutions. Institutions can build schemes which link research development with education-related development in ways that suit the cultural context.

Table 10: Continuous professional development schemes at Russell Group universities accredited by the Higher Education Academy.

No. of Russell Group universities	Level of HEA accreditation	Professional development scheme can lead to following awards
11	Descriptor 1 Descriptor 2 Descriptor 3 Descriptor 4	Associate Fellowship Fellowship Senior Fellowship Principal Fellowship
3	Descriptor 1 Descriptor 2 Descriptor 3	Associate Fellowship Fellowship Senior Fellowship
2	Descriptor 1 Descriptor 2	Associate Fellowship Fellowship
2	Currently being accredited	To be confirmed
6	No accredited CPD Scheme	

SOURCE: HIGHER EDUCATION ACADEMY (DIRECT DATA REQUEST) 1 OCTOBER 2015

In a growing number of institutions, this kind of accreditation is thought to be a useful vehicle for motivating and engaging staff:

I think we have a reasonable confidence in the UK Professional Standards Framework, and actually we have [an accredited CPD framework] which allows people to ... benchmark what they've been doing against the UK Professional Standards Framework and then seek HEA accreditation on that basis. (PVC9.8)

So [by bringing in teaching qualifications] the profile of education goes up. You want to get promotion, and one of the questions is, 'Do you have a recognised teaching qualification?' And if the answer is no, that comes up at interview. So we've made sure ... we've got a route through. It's a joiner question now, so when we recruit we ask that question ... 'Do you have a teaching qualification?' (PVC4.9)

If we want to continue along a route of a continual re-evaluation and a continual development of teaching then we have to keep reconnecting what we do to a framework that is larger than just our own internal framework system. (SF16.5)

It is now common practice across the sector to expect a Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education (or equivalent), and/or an Associate or full Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy, as part of a probationary requirement and educational development is seen in this area as predominantly linked to supporting junior staff:

We're interested in having staff who if they are going to teach our students have been appropriately prepared. (PVC4.10)

Some institutions have also directly linked achievement of different categories of fellowship to promotion at different levels, at least as an indicative requirement.

Concerns about unnecessary managerialism, however, mean that some of the PVCs and HEDs interviewed as part of this study saw dangers in stipulating achievement of particular levels of fellowship as a compulsory component of promotions criteria beyond the probationary stage. The heads of education development interviewed (HED1) also underlined the risk of achieving HEA fellowships becoming a 'tick-box' exercise, which runs counter to the career-long, authentic developmental culture they are committed to nurturing. Our data also suggest that HEA fellowships are still seen as relatively new and not something that individuals occupying leadership positions as PVCs or departmental heads in research-intensive universities have necessarily experienced:

I don't actively promote it. I'm not myself a Fellow or Principal Fellow ... I'm of a generation that wasn't very aligned personally with the HEA framework. (PVC9.8)

This might suggest that we are still in an early phase of a process of institutional change. A number of PVCs, however, note the usefulness of bringing in an institutional CPD scheme accredited in line with those four fellowship descriptors, as it has the potential to enable staff to develop meaningfully through the promotion stages:

As we rewrite the criteria and the evidence and portfolio building, we will want to include Senior and Principal Fellowship – having those in as being good things that will support senior promotion. (PVC1.7)

I think there will certainly be things that we will say we would expect you to have done – X, Y and Z in order – you know, when you're applying for Reader or Prof. They aren't there yet, they're not in our promotion criteria at the moment, but yes there would be more synergy then. Because I think it allows ... it won't just be then a tick box, but it allows people to have some external verification that they are operating at that level where it's hard to find those metrics in some other way. (PVC2.12)

For a minority of institutions, the notion of this kind of externally accredited professional recognition remains counter-cultural:

[We] would strongly resist here any kind of horrible professionalisation of teaching quality, and some requirement that everybody had to have an HEA fellowship. (PVC7.3)

So we note [the UKPSF], but it isn't really part of the language or the conversation that happens in the [institution]. It would be hard to take that to, say, promotion committee, when you're looking at reviewing the criteria or structures and so on. It's just it doesn't resonate here, I'm afraid. (PVC3.9)

By contrast, one institution has set itself a 100% target for all staff who have a teaching role to achieve a teaching qualification by 2018-19 (HED1.12).

Some academics who engage with development through an accredited CPD scheme are still considering their local applicability:

The UKPSF makes sense to me on one level, for part of my identity, but as a [science-focused academic] there's some work to be done in inhabiting them and making them make sense within our particular discipline (SF12.2)

Others find gaining awards through the education-focused CPD scheme highly motivating:

People take pride in it, and it gives them some kind of recognition and status that they may not otherwise have. (SF10.1)

So I put in for a Senior Fellowship which I was awarded, which was fantastic, and I felt it was a wonderful recognition of the sort of years of hard work that I had put in, with setting up the programme here, working with the students, always trying to do my best for students. (SF08.2)

Yes, I think the achievement is important because I think it demonstrates that I am working at the best level I possibly could in terms of innovation, leadership and applying my professionalism to my post. And it's being able to now take that stamp of approval and present myself for promotion at the end of this summer. (SF02.2)

Heads of department vary in their views of the extent to which professional recognition of this kind is valued, even from the same institution, as this exchange shows:

Speaker 4: We encourage it, because my standpoint is I don't think you can be an academic – whatever that academic title is – in a high-ranking institution and not have some kind of marker of scholarship. So it's an absolute requirement in our department, and it helps people to get promotion.

Speaker 2: I think it's actively counted against people. I've heard them say that they've told their head of department about wanting to [gain a Fellowship] and been discouraged, because actually they need another [research] grant. (HOD4.14)

Despite this variability in the way in which such activity is currently valued, the vast majority of our participants expressed a view that peer-reviewed professional recognition for education and education leadership should be valued and promoted. And some participants not currently engaged with this kind of activity appear to be open to change:

[The UKPSF] doesn't play much into our culture. That said, we have a professional training department within the university that does an awful lot of really good work. I have been starting ... discussions about whether we should be looking more at professionalising qualifications for teaching staff ... much more starting at the probation stage, where I think there is a real role to provide support to assist in the probation decisions. And actually, if we set that up properly, and we could sort of maintain CPD, then it *would* work into the promotion stages. So the focus there has been much more on probation decisions, but I think there is more work to be done. (PVC5.8)

Institutional representatives reticent to engage in this kind of externally benchmarked 'professionalisation' of teaching are clearly aware that the landscape for decision-making in relation to this activity is potentially shifting with the coming in of the Teaching Excellence Framework. However, it remains important for institutions to take responsibility for their own judgments about the quality of education:

I suppose you can see that a sort of spin-off of a TEF ... with an emphasis on institutional quality in teaching ... could be within the institution itself a kind of greater recognition of the need or indeed the value of recognising teaching quality. But I think we would probably, here at least, want to make a fairly explicit separation between our own estimation of teaching quality and what we had to do for the TEF. (PVC7.3)

Now that most institutions have developed CPD schemes accredited by the HEA and can use local judgments about awards, there is potentially room for cultures of continuous development to take root. Our data certainly suggest that these CPD schemes can make a meaningful contribution to the development of educators and education leaders and can help build stronger identities in relation to education:

[Working to gain a Senior Fellowship award] was actually really quite reflective in terms of specifically focusing on what achievements I have had over the last few years, and what their relevance was. And that clarity ... is what then enhanced my self-worth about my role and my identity with my job. (SF02.5)

Professional development review (appraisal) in Russell Group institutions

A closely related area where different cultures also pertain across the Russell Group is that of the annual or periodic 'appraisal', often referred to as a professional (or personal) development review (PDR). The extent to which this kind of review is part of the developmental culture of the institution varies considerably. Where engaged with genuinely in order to support, encourage and help guide an individual's overall development of academic practice, individual review and planning cultures have been shown to be valuable in a research-intensive context (see, for example, Floyd and Fung 2013, p. 40–55), and they can help facilitate reward and promotion.

For some institutions, PDRs have proved problematic within the culture of the institution, for example, by raising political sensitivities:

You know, we don't systematically do appraisal because we had massive political ructions in relation to it [in the past], when it ... was profoundly misunderstood [and] was strongly associated with performance management, and generated a fairly massive sort of political struggle, the ramifications of which are still remembered by a lot people. (PVC7.5)

For others, it's an important part of academic life:

[The PDR is] not just about helping to get promoted, it's trying to also drive the behaviour in appraisals to be supportive of people to get the right sort of career development. (PVC2.7)

Everybody has to have a Personal Development Review ... [We're] leading quite a transformation with the PDR process. Some of that is to do with what the educational inputs to that process are going to be – so it is a work in progress. (PVC9.6)

There is an awareness that changing the PDR to help raise the importance of education to individuals as they move forward with their roles will be valuable, but also an understanding that this rebalancing of emphasis has practical challenges, in that academic leaders promoted for their research expertise may find it difficult to guide others for whom education plays a more significant role:

(It's) difficult ... for appraisers who may have been promoted themselves on teaching and research to give somebody guidance about career development for teaching and scholarship, if it's not something they've gone through themselves. (PVC2.2)

And I think managers will need quite a lot of training to understand how to counsel people if they are moving in a teaching-focused direction. (PVC9.6)

Some institutions have developed an online facility or portfolio designed to help staff prepare for PDR, which prompts them to consider their progress in relation to teaching and to education more widely, alongside their achievements and future aspirations in relation to research and other academic areas:

The [PDR] template [includes] objectives relating to your research, to education, to enterprise, to outreach, to national committees and influence – a range of roles that you would expect from an academic at different levels. (PVC4.8)

However, our focus groups with heads of department suggest that the ways in which review processes translate into practice through the institution are variable:

I know we have an appraisal system, you know, that exists – I don't think it's well utilised. I don't think it's well understood, and there's not a clear pathway for you to develop yourself over short term or long term. (HOD4.4)

What can a reviewer (appraiser) do to advise reviewees meaningfully on developing themselves, and developing their roles? How much emphasis should be put onto research-related work and related metrics, and how much on those that are education-related? How do individual PDRs relate to the work of a department, which needs to make the most of the collective but diverse strengths of the group of colleagues, so that excellent research and education are delivered concurrently? How can they contribute to a culture of equitable reward and promotion? Our data suggest that in some institutions specific moves are being made to develop the clarity and breadth of the

PDR to help address these challenges; in others the opportunities afforded by an authentically developmental individual review are not yet being maximised.

Conclusions

The relationship between creating a genuinely developmental culture, evaluating the usefulness of external benchmarking based on the UKPSF, creating timely opportunities for individuals to receive guidance and encouragement from their more senior colleagues through PDR, and creating a developmental culture is one which arguably merits more discussion among research-intensive institutions. One particularly productive line of thinking related to the importance of what might be described as strength-based approach to both development and reward, whereby individuals are encouraged to develop according to their particular talents, passions, interests and contexts:

The people that tend to stay engaged consistently are the ones that do it because they've found an area that they're passionate about, and that somehow links [their areas of interest]. (HED2.28)

Through taking this strength-based approach, institutions can arguably maximise the potential of its human resource across its key mission areas, just as individuals develop themselves according to their particular values, skills and interests.

Recommendations 5 and 6

We recommend that research-intensive institutions review their provision for academic development to ensure that (i) it is sufficiently resourced to inform and engage academics who teach and who are education leaders throughout their careers, (ii) it provides relevant and authentic developmental opportunities to academics at all stages of their career, and (iii) it is aligned with agreed academic qualities and professional standards, for example through reference to the UK Professional Standards Framework, so that staff can gain and value professional recognition as higher education teachers and education leaders.

We recommend that research-intensive institutions review their use of periodic (typically annual) PDR to ensure that (i) it is genuinely supportive of individuals throughout their career, (ii) it pays appropriate attention to the successes and developmental needs associated with the education-related dimensions of the individual's work, and (iii) it is undertaken by reviewers who are appropriately developed to understand the importance of education to the institutional mission.

2.7. Education-focused scholarship

As noted earlier, reward through promotion is typically configured around similar categories: education (or teaching), research and 'citizenship'. However, analysis of our data suggests that there are some quite widely differing opinions in relation to one area of academic contribution, which is also a form of professional development: education-focused scholarship.

The scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL), as it is often called, has developed internationally since Ernest Boyer (1990) argued that academics need to engage with four kinds of academic scholarship: the scholarships of discovery, integration, application and teaching. He made the case that

the time has come to move beyond the tired old 'teaching versus research' debate and give the familiar and honorable term 'scholarship' a broader, more capacious meaning, one that brings legitimacy to the full scope of academic work. (Boyer 1990, p. 16)

A recent study (Fanghanel *et al.* 2015) suggests that SoTL can be a valuable part of an educator's development and make a significant contribution to developing the quality of education in a given context. The authors argue that SoTL:

- > focuses on teaching and learning strategies underpinning the curriculum
- > seeks to involve students by providing opportunities to learn in research-mode and to develop undergraduate research
- > is a research-led form of professional development [can] inform policy and practice at institutional level, for example in career development and in the promotion and recognition of teaching excellence. (Fanghanel *et al.* 2015, p. 3)

However, as the authors themselves acknowledge, SoTL is a loosely construed term that lacks definition even among its proponents. Its relationship with mainstream research into higher education, itself a broad field of study rather than a single discipline, also remains somewhat unclear; this relationship would merit further attention.

Both the perceived value of education-focused scholarship and the uncertainties that surround it are reflected in our data. It is evident that there is lack of clarity across the research-intensive institutions about its place in academic life and the extent to which it is valued:

I think one of the challenges we have in building faith in the teaching-focused career route is getting a clear, shared understanding of what that [the expectation in relation to pedagogic research and scholarship] is. Because while those debates are going on, people are saying, 'Well, if I go for promotion and I don't have a publications record in the field, do I stand a chance?' And the suspicion at the moment is that it depends on who's on your [promotion] panel – which obviously undermines faith in the whole system ... I suspect the position at the moment would be, you know, a research record in pedagogy would be a bonus – it wouldn't necessarily be an expectation. But as I say, I think we're still evolving our thinking on that, to be honest. (HED2.15)

Perspectives appear to vary even within institutions:

I have had very conflicting advice, and I wonder whether there's a difference between faculties, which slightly worries me. (HOD4.9)

Institutional leaders expressed an interest in encouraging staff to engage in forms of critical enquiry into education (and where appropriate education leadership) in their fields, and demonstrating this as part of a claim for promotion. Such scholarship is sometimes supported by, for example, offering master's level programmes of study focused on 'teaching and learning in higher education' or 'academic practice', and can lead to peer reviewed conference presentations and journal papers, as well as feeding back into local practice. A number of institutions actively encourage staff to engage in this area of activity:

We run a postgraduate certificate, a PG Cert, a Dip and a Masters of Education, or you can go through to a doctorate ... And this year they've had 150 applicants ... There is a real momentum, and people are going, okay, well, I can get this ... The other thing is we removed all the fees from all of that. So you can do a Masters and PhD here in education and there will be no fees, because you're a member of staff ... and we love you and this is about investing in you. So that changed the landscape as well. (PVC4.10)

On the other hand, there is a realisation that *requiring* staff to become, in effect, educational researchers when they already have high level research profiles in their home subject can unhelpfully pull against other priorities:

[We've] had what appeared to be a learning and teaching promotion track for a long time, but it was designed as a mirror to the research track. So it valued effectively research into learning and teaching ... And when we looked into why it did that, there was no intention to demand that level of scholarship – it had just been that somebody had written the research criteria and then substituted 'learning and teaching'. So we ended up almost by accident with a route that it isn't useful from my point of view for people to follow. I've got no problem with people being educational researchers, but they're researchers. (PVC10.1)

Once again the issue of the particularity of contexts and the need for flexibility in making judgments comes to the fore. In some contexts, it may be highly appropriate for an individual to develop their leadership and impact profile in part through undertaking and publishing in education scholarship in relation to their primary subject field – for example, in medical education or fine art education – or in a relevant generic themes such as use of educational technologies or leadership practices. For others, education scholarship may be evidenced in other ways, for example, by keeping up to date with evidence-based literature and applying it to practice. From an individual perspective, the issue is arguably whether the educator is making an impact in their field, on colleagues and on student education, in a way which is appropriate for their particular context.

Our data suggest that there is a widely perceived value in taking a **'strength-based' approach to education-focused scholarship**, which builds on the existing values, passions, intellectual curiosity and preferred modes of expression of individuals and teams. Strength-based scholarship has the potential not only to enable educators to engage with relevant aspects of existing evidence-based research into higher education, but also to connect that evidence and analysis with theoretical framings, practices, values and insights from their own specialist subject fields (see 3.2). Scholarly practices directed at education (or 'teaching and learning') have the potential to

influence current practices, enhance students' learning experiences and even contribute to the development of higher education sector policy and practice, both within and beyond the home institution.

The challenge remains of identifying the right balance between time spent on research and/or professional practice, education and/or education leadership and education-focused scholarship; an appropriate balance needs to be agreed for the given role and departmental context. Whatever is decided with respect to the 'education-focused scholarship' component of an individual's contribution to the institution (and sector), there needs to be a shared understanding of its value across the institution if equitable decisions are to be made.

Recommendation 7

We recommend that research-intensive institutions (i) articulate the value of education-focused scholarship to the institution, (ii) encourage all educators and education leaders to engage with scholarly literature sufficiently to ensure that practice is evidence-informed, at a threshold level, and (iii) enable individuals who wish to do so to continue to develop forms of education-focused scholarship designed to improve local or wider practices.

2.8. Awards and prizes

In addition to patterns of reward as expressed in job ladders and promotions criteria, research-intensive institutions have also been exploring and developing their approaches to reward and recognition through other means. This is in line with a key recommendation in the McAleese Report to the European Union, which includes the recommendation that:

Heads of institutions and institutional leaders should recognise and reward (e.g. through fellowships or awards) higher education teachers who make a significant contribution to improving the quality of teaching and learning, whether through their practice, or through their research into teaching and learning. (*McAleese 2013, p. 37*)

The use of discretionary increments and/or contribution payments to individual academics is one channel that is being pursued in some research-intensive settings.

As one head of department acknowledged:

I have given a bonus this year to the convenor for the MSc because I saw that he wanted to improve the programme and made some changes that I thought were important. (*HOD2.7*)

The award of a one-off discretionary payment to individual academics for innovations or contributions to education such as for programme leadership could be seen as a welcome means of raising the reward and recognition for education but it falls short of a fully revised set of promotion criteria. Moreover, the practice of awarding increments and monetary rewards may be somewhat constrained. One head of department highlighted how hard it was, aside from innovations in education, to reward and recognise colleagues who invest time and energy in their core teaching:

What's more difficult is [rewarding] just the general good citizen who year in year out teaches the courses well, lectures well, lectures on first year courses, doesn't make a fuss – those are the people who I think we probably let down. (*HOD6.7*)

Across the sector as a whole, universities are attaching increasing significance to teaching awards and this has also been accompanied by the development of, and an increasingly calibrated approach to, teaching awards given by students' unions (see 2.9). In a number of universities, teaching awards are handed out at the time of graduation and are accompanied by a celebration of individuals' contribution to education.

I think it means a tremendous amount to those people who are both invited to come and celebrate the teaching but also to those who then receive awards ... It is a really significant recognition for those individuals of the innovation and development they've made. (*HED1.30-31*)

However, though the celebration and award of excellent practice in education is largely welcomed, it is potentially a double-edged sword. Although our interviewees did not fully concur with Macfarlane's contention that such practices have arguably contributed to the "lower[ing] still further [of] the status of teaching, bifurcating universities between 'teaching' and 'research'" (Macfarlane 2011, p. 1), certain concerns were expressed. Heads of department and educational developers acknowledged that such awards at times have a mixed reception, because

they may be seen as “a consolation prize” in place of reward for research, particularly when the level of award is not commensurate with awards for research excellence.

Some academics in research-intensive institutions are concerned that recognition for education does not reflect well on them, and some have even refused to accept the rewards:

I got an email from someone saying, I don't need anyone to tell me I'm a good teacher, please remove my name from these awards, it's beneath me." (HED1.31)

Furthermore, there was some concern that one-off increments and teaching prizes might be used as a substitute for the 'real thing', that is for the proper recognition and reward of education through transparent and fair promotion criteria which encompass education and research:

It's all very well to say we give people teaching prizes, we give people increments and so on – that's not what people want. People want proper promotion on the basis of the excellent work they do..., regardless of whether that's in teaching or research, or across the two of them. (HOD1.9)

In addition to noting the widely accepted challenge of measuring excellence and contribution and of paying careful attention to how awards are organised and managed, a participant in one of the focus groups for education developers stressed the greater value of being able to award grants to foster authentic development of educational practice:

We found that ... actually funding development rather than rewarding excellence has been much more institutionally beneficial. (HED1.34)

It is critical that careful thought is given to the overall system through which education is recognised and rewarded both through promotions criteria and through the granting of awards and prizes, and that transparency underpins all of these processes. Our data consistently support the view that awards and prizes should not be a substitute for progression through educational contribution; they should be framed as being on a par with research awards and arguably part of a broader conceptualisation of academic identity and esteem. One education developer identified a new positive approach in his/her institution, with the introduction of the same number of awards for education, and the same amount of money, as for research. Subject to the same kinds of selection processes, the parallel award schemes symbolise a new equivalence between research and education:

And so it was as important ... to make sure that the research prizes matched the existing teaching prizes, because that starts to send a message about the parity of prestige. (HED1.32)

Finally, there was concern that systems of award and prizes overwhelmingly privilege individual contribution and pay insufficient attention to team and collective efforts. This creates a possible tension when it comes to fostering educational excellence and leadership at the institutional, school, faculty and departmental levels, as these are fundamentally team efforts. As one educational developer acknowledged:

At the moment we have a very individualised model, which has been quite divisive in some instances; it's been driving a wedge between people who are working together to do wonderful and creative things. (HED1.32)

In light of this, we would suggest that reviews of approaches to awards should not only consider whether awards and prizes fit current priorities but also whether they could be used to reward collective as well as individual impact on student education.

2.9. Student engagement

Across the research-intensive sector students have become increasingly involved in setting up and championing teaching prizes. In some cases they have been pioneers in conceptualising a calibrated set of awards and may be, indirectly at least, influencing their universities to follow suit. Student unions have identified multiple dimensions of the academic role in education, as reflected in their awards, suggesting a degree of understanding of the complexity of the academic role in the area of education. Awards may include prizes for innovative and inspirational teaching, research-inspired teaching, excellent feedback and communication, research support and guidance, professional development, personal mentoring and employability, and excellent 'well-being' support.

In addition, through a system of voting and qualitative evaluations, students have sought to develop fair processes for choosing award winners. It is evident that academics find real value in awards that are run by and voted for by the students themselves, both in terms of self-validation and validation from the students that they teach:

So the process of applying for the teaching award in the first instance, and then the senior fellowship, really left me thinking "Actually, I do a lot in this area and I know what I'm talking about. And I should have expertise that people should want to call on a particular field." (SF01.4)

Several of our PVC interviewees acknowledged the importance of working with students in this area:

I feel that we have done a lot working with our student union to raise the profile of teaching and learning within the institution, through our student-led teaching excellence awards. (PVC8.8)

This evidence of positive student engagement and good practice suggests that students could be more actively involved in other areas of educational development as partners in processes of change, as is happening already in a number of institutions, for example at the University of Exeter⁵ and University College London⁶. Student partnership and participation do appear to be of growing importance in many research-intensive settings, though there is wide variation in the nature of student involvement in university governance structures. A number of PVCs pointed to student involvement in institutional committees, with one PVC noting that there has been a commitment to placing students in his/her setting on every deliberative education committee since 2010 (PVC4.5), and another highlighting the existence of an education and students' policy network "where we do quite open, early phase discussions around possible policy change" (PVC.2.5). The comments above suggest that there is a room for even greater student involvement in processes of education development and even educational scholarship – so that students and educators can work together to enrich the quality of student education in the research-intensive sector.

Recommendation 8

We recommend that research-intensive institutions review their provision of prizes and awards to ensure that they (i) reflect parity of esteem for education with research, (ii) reward collective as well as individual contribution and success, and (iii) work with students as partners not only to develop prizes and awards but also to develop and enhance reward and recognition for staff more broadly.

⁵ <http://as.exeter.ac.uk/eqe/projects/change/>

⁶ <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/changemakers>

3. Emerging visions: academic leadership and research-based education for a new era

3.1. Excellent teaching or academic leadership? The promise of articulating levels of impact on student education

Arguably, the most productive way of solving the challenge of rewarding educators in research-focused higher education institutions is by articulating more effectively the notion of academic leadership and impact in the education (or 'teaching and learning') domain, and by ensuring that the levels of esteem, opportunity and status for those who lead in that area are on a par with those experienced by research leaders. Of course, the notion of leadership itself is complex and contested. There is a great deal of literature on leadership in general (see surveys, for example, by Bolden *et al.* 2011 and Haslam *et al.* 2011), and a growing range on the complexities of conceptualising and practising leadership within higher education settings (Bolden *et al.* 2008, 2013; Bryman 2007, 2009; Floyd 2012, 2013; Flumerfelt and Banachowski 2011; Morley 2013, 2014). Despite this, Gunn and Fisk, in their extensive literature review on the notion of teaching excellence, argue that the literature explicitly addressing 'teaching leadership' in higher education is 'woefully inadequate' (Gunn and Fisk 2013, p. 42). As they point out, Marshall *et al.* (2011, p. 91) indicate the importance for academic leaders, in broad terms, of:

- > establishing a direction or vision for learning and teaching;
- > communicating that vision and aligning the various people, strategies and resources to that vision;
- > enabling, motivating and inspiring the relevant people to participate in and realise that vision.

But work by Gibbs *et al.* (2006, 2008) and more recently by Roxå and Mårtensson (2011) and Floyd and Fung (2013, and forthcoming) highlight particular complexities relating to leadership in research-intensive contexts, with Roxå and Mårtensson noting the nuanced effects of academic 'microclimates' in relation to leadership of education, and Floyd and Fung analysing the benefits and challenges of the distributed leadership models typical of research-intensive institutions.

Perhaps in part because of these many complexities, it has sometimes been counter-cultural in universities even to speak about leadership, as one PVC who contributed to our study explains:

About a year into being [PVC], I realised that there was no cadre underneath that of people who would call themselves leaders – they said they ... would 'manage' something ... but they wouldn't say 'leadership'. You could have pinned their ears back and they wouldn't ... you know, mild torture would not have elicited that word. ... I think we haven't even used the right nomenclature when we've been describing this stuff in the past. (PVC10.11)

It is also self-evident that individuals appointed to formal leadership roles are not *de facto* effective *as* leaders, and that some individuals can create spaces for making significant strategic, creative and/or collegial contributions to student education even when in relatively junior roles. However, some broadly shared definitions of education leadership within the context of a research-intensive institution are evident in our data.

A key starting point is to recognise that leading on the education agenda should not be viewed as administration:

I think it's incumbent on us to really be supporting our members of staff to be able to demonstrate that those roles are academic leadership roles and not administrative roles. (PVC8.3)

I think it's very important ... we [get] past the notion of administration, and more into the idea of leadership. (PVC6.6)

So focusing more on the language of leadership matters. Yeah, because it's not management, it's not basic admin – it's actually thinking some really big thoughts ... and really encouraging people to think the big thoughts. [It's about saying,] just because we've done it this way before, or for many years, doesn't mean we can't think of a completely new way of what we should be doing in terms of teaching and learning for the 21st century. (PVC5.7)

Our data suggest that seeing education-focused leadership as an administrative burden which distracts from research and, worse, as activity which reflects badly on the individual's academic credentials, should be challenged by re-defining education leadership in terms of its authentic academic qualities. These include:

taking initiatives and thinking ... but also I think crucially connecting outside of your department. So it's partly about scale, partly about cross-institutional awareness, partly about innovation. (PVC9.9)

[It's] people who can synthesise various areas of activity as a rule, but people will do that in different ways and with different emphases. (PVC6.6)

Are [individuals], for example, working with learned societies, professional bodies, helping to shape curricula, working with regulators? That's the sort of level of leadership I'd expect to lead to promotion to professorial level. (PVC1.2)

Heads of department speak also of the need for education leaders to understand funding, and in professional fields to respond to the changing workforce demographics and requirements of professional bodies:

Workforce needs, what's changing in the demographic of the patient population we serve, the technologies that are emerging – everything that we do has to respond to that. So for me as an educator, in a leadership role, that is my responsibility to ensure that we are actually constantly redeveloping and delivering currently relevant education and clinical training to our students. So it really is multi-faceted. (HOD4.20)

There is a strong sense through the data of the need for education leadership to be a form of academic leadership which exemplifies creativity, innovation, an ability to inspire and influence others, and an ability to make a demonstrable impact on both student education and on the work and motivation of colleagues. Several participants in the study highlighted the need for collective rather than individualistic thinking:

In terms of things we wish we did differently, it's also about getting folks working together on this stuff as well, rather than ... it all being about the individual academic. Across the team. But again, our reward structures don't reflect that ... There's the notion of academic citizenship and your contribution to the school or college or whatever. And that's probably as far towards [promoting team-thinking] as it goes. (HED2.26)

Leaders also help clarify and realise the vision and direction of the institution:

It's often people who are focused on education in some way, and [who] or are not exclusively focused on research, who take the leadership roles which embrace the educational direction of the institution. (PVC6.1)

A number of participants in our study are keen to make a clear distinction between good *teaching*, which arguably everyone with a university teaching role can and should be able to evidence, and making an impact upon education in a particular field locally, institutionally, nationally or even internationally, in such a way that promotion to the most senior roles is merited:

I'm quite clear that no one's going to get promoted certainly to professorial level and possibly not even [to the grade below], but certainly not professorial, for good teaching. Whether it's just innovation in the classroom, good peer review, good student review, good progression, that alone is not sufficient to get to [the] highest level, professorial level. But when you couch it in terms of educational leadership, what are they actually contributing, certainly at faculty or probably at the institutional level, to leadership in education? (PVC1.2)

I think myself there is necessarily an obvious difference between giving outstanding educational leadership which enables an institution to innovate and to move forward and to feel that it's consciously doing something that dramatically enhances standards, and being able to teach incredibly well – which lots of people can do. (PVC7.4)

'Teaching excellence' is, of course, a highly contested concept. Gunn and Fisk (2013) point to a "growing complexity and lack of consensus in attending to teaching excellence in the academy" in terms of:

1. the relationships between teaching excellence and excellent learning in general;
2. the relationships between the criteria of teacher excellence and the changing nature/diversification of academic roles and profiles as well as across a career long span;
3. the relationships between, and efficacy of, reward and recognition systems for teaching and research. (Gunn and Fisk 2013, p. 6)

Land and Gordon (2015) also make some pertinent points, highlighting the relationship between the context-specific nature of teaching and the broader dimensions of leadership:

Many examples of teaching excellence are highly localised, often being driven by needs perceived by an individual teacher. They are also frequently subject or issue specific. Both features can justly be described as strengths. However, when broader overviews are taken in relation to spread and impact ... then attention may understandably turn to issues of *scale, connectivity* and *intentionality*. (Land and Gordon 2015, p. 15)

These notions reflect key criteria included in Descriptor 4 of the UKPSF. They include, along with the championing of key areas of activity, core knowledge and professional values as articulated in the UKPSF and a commitment to professional development, three criteria which echo Land and Gordon's "scale, connectivity and intentionality":

- > successful, strategic leadership to enhance student learning, with a particular, but not necessarily exclusive, focus on enhancing teaching quality in institutional and/or (inter)national settings;
- > establishing effective organizational policies and/or strategies for supporting and promoting others in delivering high quality teaching and support for learning;
- > championing, within institutional and/or wider settings, an integrated approach to academic practice (incorporating, for example, teaching, learning, research, scholarship, administration). (UKPSF 2011, p. 7)

The analysis of our interviews with educators and education leaders working at different levels in their institutions and our review of relevant literature suggest the need for a set of criteria which would enable institutions to recognise more clearly the contributions of academic education leaders. We frame these here as five key criteria together with accompanying illustrative questions, which could form the basis for a set of institutional criteria for promotion toward a professorial post.

11 Articulating academic education leadership: towards criteria for promotion to a professorial post	
Criteria	Key questions
Vision and implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > How has the individual taken deliberate, strategic steps to develop high quality education in their field, or across fields? > How has a clear vision for quality education, appropriate for a research-intensive context, been translated into a sequence of targeted and demonstrably effective actions? > How has the individual deliberately drawn on an evidence-base, including evidence presented through relevant higher education literature and critical analysis of current practices, to ensure that steps taken to achieve the vision are evidence-informed?
Internal connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > How has the individual helped to build connections within the team(s) in order to foster a shared commitment to high quality education within the research-rich disciplinary context? > How has the individual fostered connections with other internal teams, for example, by developing partnerships with other departments or professional colleagues across the institution?
External connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > How has the individual connected beyond the institution, for example, with alumni, with local, national or international organisations, or with employers' groups, to make a positive impact on student education? > How has the individual's work made an impact externally, for example, through influencing subject associations, professional bodies or the work of other institutions?
Research–education synergies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > How has the individual taken steps to enrich curriculum with research, both in content and through enquiry-based approaches to learning? > How has the individual taken steps to engage students with leading research and researchers in the relevant field(s)? > How has the individual fostered a culture in which students can participate in the practices of research, for example, through research dissemination and public engagement?

Overall impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Can the individual make a credible narrative that brings together all other elements, providing evidence of significant leadership contribution, and showing how the work has made a strategic impact upon the particular context in which s/he works? > Can the individual articulate the overall contribution made to the institution's published vision(s) for high quality student education in a research-intensive context?
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The observation that education leaders have the potential to demonstrate significant cross-institutional *and* external impact of a kind commensurate with that expected of world-leading researchers implies that such leaders should be rewarded with professorial titles which directly correlate, in esteem and nomenclature, with professorships awarded for research:

We've also made the decision that there's only one professorial level at [this institution]. There won't be a professor, 'Not Quite a Professor (Education)' or 'Not Quite a Professor (Enterprise)'. There is *professorial*, and what you have to do is demonstrate the characteristics of what you expect of the professoriat, regardless of which job family you've come through. (PVC4.1)

For some institutions, the notion of promotion to full professor on the basis of leadership in and impact through education is still counter-cultural, but for a large majority this opportunity is already in place or being developed. A number of PVCs particularly highlighted the importance of professorships being given to respected educators in the institution as a clear message of the importance of education and educational leadership in the overall mission of the institution.

We made a number of significant promotions for people who have been in teaching roles for a long time. There was a strong emphasis on teaching and leadership. (PVC9.1)

The academic and professional qualities needed to be an education leader reflect very closely those needed to be a research leader: the Vitae Framework (Vitae 2015), for example, identifies "engagement, influence and impact" as a key domain.

Understanding these to be qualities of academic education leadership, too, moves us on from arguments which circle around distinguishing between threshold qualities and 'higher-level' qualities in relation to individual teaching performance:

In terms of academic performance management, however, excellence is used to differentiate threshold quality teaching and higher-level quality teaching in order to clarify reward and recognition pathways. (Gunn and Fisk 2013, p. 10)

Can the research-intensive sector come to an agreement that strategic education-focused leadership is an authentic form of academic leadership of equal value to that of research-focused academic leadership? Can institutions commit to recognising education-focused roles as fully academic, and to finding the right balance in their workforce of staff who are research focused, who are researcher-educators, and who are education-focused? Exploring these questions, at the very least, seems necessary if research-intensive institutions are to continue to provide the highest quality education and leadership in the new era. If academics know that being a demonstrably effective educator is not only a standard requirement, but also a dimension of their academic contribution to the institutional community which could pave the way for future leadership opportunities within the overall balance of institutional priorities, this could benefit the individuals, their departments and the whole institution and, most importantly, current and future students.

Institutions with multiple goals will, of course, need to ensure that these are all met, and give appropriate weightings to the contributions to research, education and other academic domains. But greater flexibility within and between job roles and career trajectories and a more inclusive notion of 'academic' contribution could allow institutions to have the agility of focus needed for sustainability, whilst also enabling individuals to excel.

Recommendation 9

We recommend that research-intensive institutions, individually and/or in collaboration, (i) define clearly the differences between threshold teaching professionalism, teaching excellence and effective education leadership, and (ii) ensure that education leaders receive equivalent markers of prestige and opportunities for promotion to those experienced by research-focused leaders, including the title of Professor, on the basis of their leadership in and impact on the education domain.

3.2. Research equals teaching? The promise of research-based education

Our data suggest that underlying the challenges associated with rewarding educators in research-intensive settings is the gap that has opened up over time *between* research and education. Institutions tend in practice to undertake these core areas of activity as if they were largely separate endeavours. This division of labour is not surprising, reflecting as it does the separate funding streams for research and education. 'Teaching', in English universities at least, is increasingly funded through student fees and through a series of mechanisms relating to 'priority areas', for example, subjects deemed to be 'strategically important' by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE 2015a). For research, on the other hand, HEFCE currently provides annual funding for the English institutions, in the form of a 'block grant' distributed on the basis of an assessment of research quality (QR)⁷. Additional funds for specific research projects are drawn from research councils and other bodies, including the European Union and charities (HEFCE 2015b). It is not clear, however, that the separation in funding streams should result in institutions' paying limited attention to the research–education synergies, as Locke has explained:

It could be argued that the separation of research and teaching is itself the result of policy and operational decisions made over some time to distinguish the way these activities are funded, managed, assessed and rewarded. Even if this were proven to be the case, however, this would not necessarily excuse higher education institutions (HEIs) from an obligation to maximise the beneficial relations between the two. (*Locke 2005, p. 101*)

The conceptual and operational splits between education and research are typically played out through separate institutional roles (e.g. PVC Education and PVC Research; Director of Education and Director of Research) and also in institutional committee structures, which tend to address educational priorities quite separately from research priorities. This division is echoed in separate strategies for research and for education, which direct their attention to different external drivers: the Research Excellence Framework (REF) on the one hand, and 'teaching quality assurance' drivers such as the internal subject review, the National Student Survey (NSS), Quality Assurance Agency Higher Education Review (or equivalent), and now the forthcoming Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), on the other. This divided attention and division of resource (financial and human), although pragmatic, may mean that institutions are not fully exploiting the synergies between education and research, not seeing the similarities and links between education leadership and research leadership, and not therefore articulating criteria for promotion to senior posts in an appropriately nuanced way.

The PVCs contributing to our study made a number of seemingly heartfelt observations about the unhelpfulness of the division between education and research:

That's what we do in the end – everything else is just decoration. We teach and we do research. And if those things don't fit together we have to ask, well, why not, and how can we bring them together? In an academic career, how do we make those things fit together? In terms of the distribution of resources, how do we support both of those things? – REF performance, yes, but education performance alongside it. [We need to] constantly have those questions, those two issues, at the forefront. (*PVC3.10*)

There is an awareness among the participants in our study that students have not always fully benefited from the research-rich context in which they are studying, as illustrated by this anecdote:

⁷ These funding structures are set to change in the light of the UK Green Paper (BIS 2015).

I stood next to the president of the students' union at the end of her term of office actually, and we were opening a new [research facility] ... and [she said], 'Do you know, I've been here for 4 years and I didn't realise we had half of this wonderful research'. And that really struck a chord with me, because this was a very engaged student who'd gone on to being president, and if she didn't know, what does that say? (PVC2.7)

Many individual staff do, of course, recognise and care about the synergies:

There's a real core of committed, dedicated people across all job families, I'd say, who really value the teaching. They can see the impact of their teaching on the research and vice versa. (HED1.3)

There is less confidence that the institution's strategic vision for linking education more closely with research is always realised:

We have some quite sophisticated discussions about the relationship between research and teaching, and what it means to be an academic in the 21st century ... The extent to which that's lived in practice is probably patchy ... At strategic level, if I'm honest, I think we're a bit more muddled. (HED2.17)

Some participants in the study do articulate clearly, however, ways in which students can benefit from being more closely involved with the institution's research – not just hearing about it, but becoming active participants in research studies:

We need to try and show how ... students can add value to the research process. You know we're really fortunate, we get fantastic, bright students coming here. I think it's about being quite imaginative in how we use and harness the sort of intellectual fire power of our students, where it's almost like crowd sourcing good ideas and generating and testing of hypotheses ... I think ... there's a journey to be taken with some of the staff who are perhaps a bit sceptical about it. (PVC1.4)

Another PVC notes the opportunities for more interesting curriculum models afforded by the increase in interdisciplinary research:

The interesting curriculum challenge that we face now is that we deliver a research driven education ... If we promote more and develop more interdisciplinary research to address significant challenges for society ... how do we then translate that into an undergraduate experience? Because I don't buy this piece about, oh, you can only do that with postgraduates. (PVC4.7)

This movement towards more interdisciplinary research that addresses complex global challenges creates the possibility of re-thinking curriculum and of developing new ways of engaging students in helping to solve such challenges. The value of engaging students more directly with research through research-based, enquiry-based and problem-based pedagogies is reflected in a growing body of literature which highlights the numerous benefits of students' participating regularly in research, at undergraduate as well as at postgraduate levels (see e.g. Brew 2006, 2010; Chang 2005; Jenkins *et al.* 2007; Healey and Jenkins 2009; Zimbardi and Myatt 2014; Fung forthcoming). A number of research-intensive institutions are starting to develop fresh approaches to curriculum along these lines: the Connected Curriculum⁸ initiative at University College London is just one example.

Enhancing educational provision by linking students' learning much more closely with the practices of research and researchers indicates the need to review patterns of reward and promotion for staff, who can, with this model, be involved in both research and education simultaneously as the two practices become more closely intertwined:

We've been talking more about our commitment to education and research-based education. I think it's certainly raised expectation that something will be done about promotion on education. And I think what I'm now doing is thinking what form that would take ... A key part of [our] strategy ... is really the development of our educational offer – the bringing closer together of education and research. We are expecting that staff will need to devote quite significant parts of their academic career to that endeavour. (PVC1.2–3)

This is not to say that engaging students more closely with research activity to enrich both their learning experiences and the research itself is an easy undertaking:

⁸ <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/teaching-learning/connected-curriculum>

I mean I think you do get people say 'Well you know my research is so out there, what could an undergraduate possibly have to do with it?' (PVC1.4)

The practice of research-based education is likely to vary between departments, from subject to subject, and at different levels of a student's education, just as research in one subject can comprise very different practices and kinds of outputs from those found in another discipline. When Gibbs looked at different ways in which 'excellence' in education can be considered in his publication *Dimensions of Quality* (Gibbs 2010), he also argued that "different pedagogic phenomena, and hence different process variables, are likely to be salient in different institutions" (2010, p. 6). Reaching a working consensus on what excellent education *is* in a research-intensive context is an interesting challenge, but Gibbs argues that a research environment can have a very positive effect on student education *if* these benefits are conceptualised and acted upon:

The key point here is that such benefits have to be deliberately engineered – they do not accrue by magic simply because research is going on as well as teaching. The institutional indicator of quality in these studies is the existence of an undergraduate research opportunities scheme, not the strength of the institution's research. (Gibbs 2010, p. 29)

A number of contributors to our study also highlighted in various ways the value of thinking afresh, at this time of change in the sector, about forms of research-based education that reflect fully their institutions' research strengths and characteristics.

Of course, the development of educational provision cannot be at the expense of research productivity, and there remain concerns about getting the right balance:

My argument is the vast majority of people should be doing research and teaching, and they play off each other. So I think there is a concern ... justified to some extent ... that if you just have a refocus on teaching, the research within the institute is affected. And I think actually a lot of that is just managing the argument and saying, 'No, we're not saying that – there are some people who will just be judged on the basis of their teaching, but still for the vast majority of people it's a balance of research and teaching'. (PVC5.5)

The way to achieve this rebalance is, for a number of contributors to our study, not to draw attention away from research, but to maximise the synergies between research and education. This requires more resource, support and recognition to be made available to staff who lead on these research–education synergies in order to raise the quality of student education:

What you need is somebody who is able to synthesise these various aspects, and that's what the institution kind of benefits most from. (PVC6.2)

The suggestion overall is that while the allocation of resource to the right areas is vital, developing an institution's sense of how it can move forward in the new era is at the core of the challenge. Our analysis suggests that this is an issue of re-thinking what being a research-intensive institution is all about. Bringing research and education much closer together also has the potential to provide distinctive educational experiences for students in a growing and changing market, and to underpin the economic success of institutions in the future:

Unless we make the educational offer consistent with our research standing and our global brand, we have a long-term existential problem. (PVC3.3)

With respect to rewarding educators and education leaders, the broadly shared strategic aspiration emerging from our data is to develop the kind of "mixed scholarly economy" (HED1.9) whereby individuals can contribute according to their strengths at different times in their career, and which ideally advances research and education simultaneously, while providing both staff and students with an enriching and productive sense of belonging to a research and learning community.

Linking this argument to our discussion of 'teaching excellence', we propose that there is a significant opportunity here for research-intensives to re-frame their distinctive contribution(s) to a genuinely 'higher' education. Elite institutions were criticised at the 2015 *THE World Academic Summit* by Dirk Van Damme of the OECD for rejecting the possibility of a standardised measurement of learning outcomes as proposed by the AHELO project (Tremblay *et al.* 2012). Van Damme is reported as saying that highly selective universities "do not offer much value in teaching and learning once students arrive", and as challenging them to "demonstrate their worth" (THE 08 Oct 2015). Re-defining what is special about research-based education is arguably the way to do this emphatically. By articulating more clearly and confidently the particular (rather than generalised) kinds of 'learning gain'

experienced when becoming a co-researcher in a given research field, the research-intensive sector can restate its educational contribution to individuals and to society in a rapidly changing, digitally connected, global knowledge economy. Research-intensive institutions are by definition international, drawing in the world's best researchers; with the significant rise in the number of students enrolled outside their country of citizenship, from 1.3 million in 1990 to 4.1 million in 2010 (Tremblay 2012, p. 24), the higher education landscape is truly global, and institutions can aim to attract the best students in the world to study alongside leading researchers. In re-stating their collective vision for research-based education, and the varieties of vision appropriate for different disciplines, research-intensive institutions can also re-frame the criteria whereby educators and education leaders are regarded and rewarded. Taken together with the re-framing of education leadership as a form of authentic academic leadership, new articulations of research-based education have the potential to begin to break down the cultural divide between these two core pillars of academic endeavour.

Recommendation 10

We recommend that research-intensive institutions (i) investigate ways of exploiting fully the synergies between research and education across the institution, for example by creating and resourcing a committee or developmental group whose focus this is and by refreshing their visions for distinctively research-based education, and (ii) engage, develop, empower and reward Heads of Department (or equivalent) to take a lead in developing research-education synergies in ways which are meaningful and effective in their disciplinary context(s).

4. Conclusions and recommendations

4.1. Conclusions

This is a time of great opportunity for research-intensive institutions to review their approaches to rewarding staff who are educators and education leaders. Changes are already being implemented to raise the status of education (or 'teaching and learning') within institutions, but there is still much to do.

Our recommendations include specific points relating to **nomenclature, career routes, promotion criteria and processes, and teaching awards**. We argue for focusing on 'education' as a holistic, collective practice rather than adopting exclusively individualised models of 'teaching excellence'. We suggest that **strength-based promotions processes** allow individuals to make a holistic case for the impact of their work overall on the institution's mission, and that promotion panels should be genuinely inclusive, comprising expertise from the full spectrum of academic practice. We note the importance of **professional development, recognition and review**, activities which enable individuals to become increasingly engaged and effective through their career. We also suggest that narrowly defined measures of 'scholarship of teaching and learning', such as publications in education journals, should be broadened into a richer articulation of **strength-based scholarship**, which encourages individuals to play to their strengths, interests, values and contexts in developing scholarly, evidence-based approaches to academic practice.

We argue that there are two even more fundamental themes that need to be addressed if research-intensive universities are to develop more equitable cultures in terms of rewarding staff. Firstly, institutions need genuinely to **afford education leaders full academic citizenship in the institutional community**. We offer illustrative criteria for fully recognising effective academic education leadership at professorial level (p. 47), which differ in quality and scope from the criteria needed both for identifying threshold standards for teaching and for 'excellence' in teaching. Secondly, institutions need to **maximise the synergies between research and education**. The current fissure between the two areas of activity, at both strategic and operational levels, has arguably limited the possibilities of both. Developing distinctive models of **research-based education**, which provide opportunities for students at all levels of the curriculum to participate in cutting edge research and enquiry alongside researchers, has the potential to provide rich, demanding, interdisciplinary and applied learning experiences, preparing students for life and employment in a changing national and global landscape. Re-articulating research-education synergies also showcases **the integrated nature of academic practice**, paving the way for the fundamental cultural changes needed if current inequalities of opportunity and prestige for staff focusing on education are to become a thing of the past. There is a real opportunity here for research-intensive institutions to **articulate more effectively, to internal and external stakeholders, the distinctive contributions they make to student education**, and show their genuine commitment to providing education of the highest quality.

4.2. Recommendations: a summary

Every research-intensive institution has a different heritage, is differently structured and has a distinctive mission. Each institution is in a different place in relation to the issue of 'parity of esteem' for educators and researchers, and indeed this phrase will be interpreted and received differently around different institutional tables. However, we make the following recommendations for all research-intensive institutions to consider internally and, where possible, collectively in their mission group.

Recommendations: a summary

<p>Recommendation 1</p>	<p>We recommend that senior management teams in research-intensive institutions (i) develop a credible and persuasive narrative regarding the importance of education to the institutional mission, in the context of competing drivers for change, (ii) ensure that this narrative is reiterated consistently to internal and external audiences, and (iii) use the narrative explicitly to inform and shape changes to reward and recognition processes.</p>
<p>Recommendation 2</p>	<p>We recommend that research-intensive institutions review their 'job families' to ensure that all staff with substantive posts as teachers and/or education leaders are (i) defined as academic, in line with the HESA definition, and (ii) afforded opportunities to rise to the most senior posts on the basis of the strength and scope of their contribution to the institution's educational mission. If these recommendations cannot be effected, a clear rationale should be given to staff explaining why this is so, and parallel markers of esteem and opportunities for promotion should be developed.</p>
<p>Recommendation 3</p>	<p>We recommend that research-intensive institutions review their promotion criteria to ensure that (i) they illustrate accurately the current balance of academic priorities, in line with the institutional mission and (ii) they are fully understood by academics.</p>
<p>Recommendation 4</p>	<p>We recommend that research-intensive institutions review promotion processes to ensure that (i) promotion panels have a diverse profile, fully inclusive of women and BME staff, (ii) panels represent academic expertise from both the research and education domains, (iii) all panel members are developed to understand issues of unconscious bias, and (iv) cases for promotion can be made by all educators, in any job family, on the basis of the strength of their overall contribution to the institution's mission.</p>
<p>Recommendation 5</p>	<p>We recommend that research-intensive institutions review their provision for academic development to ensure that (i) it is sufficiently resourced to inform and engage academics who teach and who are education leaders throughout their careers, (ii) it provides relevant and authentic developmental opportunities to academics at all stages of their career, and (iii) it is aligned with agreed academic qualities and professional standards, for example through alignment with the UK Professional Standards Framework, so that staff can gain and value professional recognition as higher education teachers and education leaders.</p>
<p>Recommendation 6</p>	<p>We recommend that research-intensive institutions review their use of periodic (typically annual) PDR to ensure that it is (i) genuinely supportive of individuals</p>

	throughout their career, (ii) pays appropriate attention to the successes and developmental needs associated with the education dimensions of the individual's work, and (iii) is undertaken by reviewers who are appropriately developed to understand the importance of education to the institutional mission.
Recommendation 7	We recommend that research-intensive institutions (i) articulate the value of education-focused scholarship to the institution, (ii) encourage all educators and education leaders to engage with scholarly literature sufficiently to ensure that practice is evidence-informed, at a threshold level, and (iii) enable individuals who wish to do so to continue to develop forms of education-focused scholarship designed to improve local or wider practices.
Recommendation 8	We recommend that research-intensive institutions review their provision of prizes and awards to ensure that they (i) reflect parity of esteem for education with research, (ii) reward collective as well as individual contribution and success, and (iii) work with students as partners not only to develop prizes and awards but also to develop and enhance reward and recognition for staff more broadly.
Recommendation 9	We recommend that research-intensive institutions, individually and/or in collaboration, (i) define clearly the differences between threshold teaching professionalism, teaching excellence and effective education leadership, and (ii) ensure that education leaders receive equivalent markers of prestige and opportunities for promotion to those experienced by research-focused leaders, including the title of Professor, on the basis of their leadership in and impact on the education domain.
Recommendation 10	We recommend that research-intensive institutions (i) investigate ways of exploiting fully the synergies between research and education across the institution, for example by creating and resourcing a committee or developmental group whose focus this is and thus refreshing their visions for distinctively research-based education, and (ii) engage, develop, empower and reward Heads of Department (or equivalent) to take a lead in developing research-education synergies in ways which are meaningful and effective in their disciplinary context(s).

4.3. Towards future research

Future research studies are needed to focus on a number of related areas, including:

- > the ways in which funding is allocated to and within research-intensive institutions: can resource be allocated more specifically to research–education synergies, and what challenges and benefits would follow?;
- > the extent to which the structural and conceptual divides between research and education entrench inequities and hinder the progression of women and BME in academic careers;

- > the extent to which 'research only' staff also experience limited opportunities for reward and career development;
- > the composition and decision-making processes of promotion panels;
- > the role of Heads of Departments (i) as barriers and/or enablers of promotion, development and reward and (ii) as leaders of research-education synergies in their subject(s);
- > the possibilities for engaging students in developing research-based models of education and the development of rewards for educators and education leaders;
- > new approaches to developing education leaders in research-intensive settings, including the impact of the UK Professional Standards Framework;
- > comparative studies of the ways that educators and education leaders are regarded, rewarded and promoted across the research-intensive sector in Europe and globally.

5. Self-evaluative benchmarking questions for institutions

In this final section of the report, we introduce a set of self-evaluative benchmarking questions which institutions can use as a catalyst to assess opportunities for enhancing practice and, where appropriate, develop a plan for change. The questions break down our recommendations above into more finely grained elements. Research-intensive institutions are proud of their diverse histories, structures and cultural characteristics, and not all institutions will answer the questions in similar ways, but using the questions as prompts could facilitate analytic discussion and creative ideas for new directions which meet institutional needs and express institutional values in the new era.

Clarifying the institutional mission for the current era

1. Does the university have a clearly articulated vision about the distinctiveness of their educational mission in a research-intensive institution in the 21st century?
2. Are steps being taken to ensure that the vision is consistently articulated across all areas, in both internal and external communications?
3. Is there complementarity between the institution's strategies on education and research, and are these consistently communicated by all senior and middle leaders across the institution?

'Job families', career structures and academic identity

4. Has the institution articulated clearly the multi-faceted nature of academic practice, and the central importance of education within that practice?
5. Is the full range of academic practice reflected appropriately in the structure of job families, role profiles and career structures?
6. Are all job families, whether education-focused, research and education or research-focused, explicitly constituted and named as academic roles rather than 'professional'? If not, are the reasons for this clearly articulated to staff?
7. Do all academic job families allow progression to senior grades, including professorial?
8. To achieve equality of opportunity and institutional agility in relation to human resources, is there either one integrated academic job family that allows individuals and teams to balance priorities and play to their strengths, or sufficient permeability between job families or promotion pathways?

Promotion criteria, processes and equality of opportunity

9. Do the institution's promotion criteria take a strength-based approach to academic progression, taking account of the multiple dimensions of the academic role and enabling individuals to demonstrate excellence in different areas at different stages of their career?
10. Are interpretations of promotion criteria regularly reviewed to ensure that impact through education and/or academic education leadership is valued alongside impact through research and other academic contributions (e.g. public engagement, internationalisation, and enterprise)?⁹
11. Is the format whereby individuals make a claim for promotion sufficiently inclusive and flexible to allow a case to be made by individuals working across all disciplines and in atypical contexts?
12. Are the promotion criteria, the ways in which they are interpreted and the decision-making processes fully transparent to all staff?
13. Are members of promotion panels fully informed and developed in relation to current institutional values and priorities including in the area of education?
14. Are panels constituted inclusively to include expertise from groups under-represented in senior roles?

Professional recognition, development and review

⁹ Academic education leadership is understood to be a form of academic leadership which exemplifies vision and its implementation, creativity, innovation, inspiration and a demonstrable impact on both student education and on the work and motivation of colleagues at departmental, institutional and international levels.

15. Are academics' contributions to education and educational leadership discussed regularly as an integral part of annual review processes?
16. Are professional development reviews (PDRs) or equivalent informed by a detailed set of criteria, which articulate different education-related and leadership-related contributions and correlating developmental activities alongside other dimensions of academic practice?
17. Are both reviewers and reviewees fully informed and developed to understand the importance and nature of the full spectrum of criteria?
18. Is sufficient resource allocated to providing educators and education leaders with opportunities for authentic professional development through successive stages of their career?
19. Does the institution provide resource and opportunities for staff to gain professional recognition through Higher Education Academy fellowships?
20. Is CPD provision suitably tailored for the research-intensive context and for different subject disciplines, making appropriate links with development in research and other dimensions of academic practice?

Education-focused scholarship

21. Is education-focused scholarship supported at a threshold level through early career academic staff achieving HEA fellowship (or other taught qualifications), so that evidence informs educational practices from the start of an academic career, and so that good practices can be shared across the institution?
22. At more senior levels, are education-focused academic staff supported to undertake education-related research where appropriate, and is this valued as one among a set of possible measures of impact on student education?
23. Are adequate resources available to facilitate the introduction of innovations in academic practice by individuals and teams, and where appropriate to foster enquiry-based learning and the sharing of good educational practice within the discipline and across the university?
24. Do academics and senior education leaders benchmark and share practice at both a departmental and institutional level with comparable institutions in the UK and internationally?

Awards and prizes

25. Are the criteria for awards and prizes for education excellence and academic education leadership regularly reviewed to ensure that they reflect current institutional priorities in education?
26. Are the criteria clearly and transparently communicated across the university?
27. Do those responsible for judging awards and prizes – whether these are panel members and/or representatives of senior leadership – include individuals with specialist education expertise?
28. Are awards and prizes for education excellence and academic education leadership presented at the same time as awards for research? Where financial reward is involved, are the sums equivalent? Is senior leadership involved in processes of award-giving and celebration?
29. Are there awards for collaborative team contributions, both within and across academic departments, in areas of education excellence and academic education leadership?
30. Are students involved in the process of designing, nominating and decision-making in relation to education awards?

Student engagement

31. Are students, from the time of their arrival in the institution, integrated into the institutional community as partners and co-developers of educational experiences?
32. Do students have opportunities to become involved with 'rewarding' the educators and education leaders and in discussions about what this might mean within the given institutional context?
33. Is student feedback about their educational experiences regularly solicited from students through a range of different methods and does this inform discussion about educational policy and practice?
34. Are students sufficiently involved in university governance structures?

Academic education leadership and research-based education

35. Does the university have an institutional forum where research and education leaders come together to explore synergies between research and education and to develop distinctive initiatives for research-based education?

36. Is there an ongoing exploration among academic staff of possible synergies between research and education at every level of learning, which takes into account specific disciplinary contexts?
37. Are authentic research-based educational opportunities available to all students in every year of their degree programme and in every discipline or interdisciplinary setting?
38. Is there a shared understanding and clear articulation of the differences between excellent individual teaching, the collective provision of an excellent student experience in the round, and academic education leadership in the institution, and of how each of these elements contribute to the institution's mission?
39. Is this differentiation clearly and consistently communicated across the institution by senior and departmental leaders, and reflected in patterns of reward and recognition at different grades?

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