



Independent Review of the Higher Education Academy: Report Appendices

April 2014

Exceptional people delivering exceptional results

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APPENDIX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE AND KEY LINES OF ENQUIRY

1. Terms of reference

The aims and scope of the 2013 review were as follows:

The review should cover the period from 2011 to 2013 (the restructuring and post restructuring period) in order to assess 'whether the restructured organisation is achieving the general priorities set by the funding bodies and its wider aims and objectives' (2012-13 HEFCE grant letter, paragraph 12).

The focus of the evaluation was to be on:

- Analysing and assessing the strategic role and contribution of the HEA in the sector through the lenses of reputation, relevance and reach (including a focus on the outcomes of activities and not just the volume and range of activities) and, in particular, looking at impact and benefit.
- The role the HEA plays in enhancing learning opportunities and promoting excellence in the view of:
 - Institutions
 - Students (including their representative body, the NUS)
 - Funders
 - Reviewing the reorganisation of the HEA, in particular, analysing the organisational capacity and effectiveness of the HEA since its restructure and implementation of related changes. Governance issues and the role of the Board and its sub-committees should also be considered.
- Assessing progress since the 2007/08 review: have the issues raised in the 2007 Oakleigh report been fully addressed?
- The success of the HEA in meeting the priorities and objectives set by the funding bodies, and in dealing with the challenges of increasing policy divergence between the four nations.
- Performance against the Academy's Strategic Plans: 2008-2012 and 2012-16.
- Efficiency and effectiveness of the distribution of funds and value for money, i.e. are funding levels appropriate, is funding being appropriately allocated internally (i.e. are funding body grants spent in proportion to other sources of income, such as subscriptions and contracted services, and are the latter not being used disproportionately to build reserves, for example), and is the duplication of funding being avoided?
- Sustainability of the HEA – including the potential for diversifying or strengthening income streams.

2. Approach and key lines of enquiry

The approach for the review included:

- Comprehensive desk-based review of relevant, evidential sources from the HEA and from its funding bodies which provided detailed background information on the HEA and its relationship with funders, owners and partners.

- Review of the HEA's current operations and governance structures, based on documentary review and onsite fieldwork at the HEA's offices in York, including interviews with key HEA teams and reviews of systems and processes relating to activities within scope.
- A programme of stakeholder consultation across the UK HE sector, covering all areas of scope and key lines of enquiry.

2.1 Desk-based data and information review

During this initial phase the review team consolidated and review all key data sources from the HEA and from its funding bodies which provided detailed background information on the HEA and its relationship with funders, owners and partners. These also informed the development of an evaluation framework.

2.2 HEA organisation review

This included detailed analysis of the HEA's current organisation and governance structures, and considered in particular:

- Outcomes from the HEA's reorganisation.
- Effectiveness of the current governance and management arrangements and structures and extent to which these are 'fit for purpose'.
- Effectiveness and efficiency in deployment of current resources (post restructure) – how the organisation has been set up to deliver against strategic aims and to meet funders' and owners' priorities.
- Sustainability – effectiveness of approaches to commercialisation and development of income streams.
- Efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation's approach to distribution of funds and achieving value for money.
- HEA's approach to (and identification of capacity/capabilities and infrastructure to support the above through):
 - Performance management
 - Financial management
 - Programme and project management
 - Customer relationship management

This phase of the review involved both onsite fieldwork and offsite analysis: interviews and consultation with key HEA teams, reviews of systems and processes relating to activity within scope for evaluation.

2.3 Stakeholder consultation

The approach to consultation covered all areas of the scope for the review, and the key lines of enquiry which flowed from these. In general terms, the purpose of consultation across the sector on the work, structure and governance, outcomes and impact of the HEA over the period for review was to provide a richness of context and a key component of the qualitative and quantitative evidence base.

Figure 1 below provides a high-level summary of the relationship between the review scope and core lines of enquiry. Further detailed questions for consultation have been derived from these to inform consultation briefings, invitations to participate and question areas for focus groups, interviews and surveys with the main stakeholder groups).

Figure 1 Review scope and key lines of enquiry

Review Scope	Key Lines of Enquiry
<p>a. Analysing and assessing the strategic role and contribution of the Academy in the sector, in particular, looking at impact and benefit, and through the lenses of reputation, relevance and reach (including a focus on the outcomes of activities and not just the volume and range of activities).</p>	<p>Perceptions and assessment of impact / influence of HEA activities on institution's own strategic aims for enhancement of learning & teaching. (Influence / impact may take the form of, for example: release of additional resource to support learning & teaching; change of policy or practice; greater uptake of HEA services / accreditations / grants etc)</p>
	<p>Perceptions of relevance of HEA activity and its contribution to their institution (and reasons for this)</p>
	<p>Perceptions and assessment of comparative impact/influence of: - other sector bodies (with related or similar remit) - non HEA-funded L&T enhancement activity</p>
	<p>Perceptions and assessment of impact / influence of HEA activities on own subject area for enhancement of learning & teaching.</p>
	<p>Perceptions of relevance of HEA activity and its contribution to their subject area (and reasons for this)</p>
	<p>Perceptions / assessment of quality / maturity of institutional relationship management approach by HEA</p>
	<p>Perceptions / assessment of 'additionality' of HEA - what could not be achieved without HEA funding / institutional / subject-specific support?</p>
	<p>Perceptions / assessment of the quality of HEA's contribution to policy development across UK</p>
<p>b. The role the Academy plays in enhancing learning opportunities and promoting excellence in the view of: - Institutions - Students (including their representative body, the NUS) - Funders</p>	<p>Levels of awareness of HEA activities (across strategic aims)</p>
	<p>Uptake levels of HEA services offered to the sector</p>
	<p>HEA strategic objectives: perceptions / assessment of success in achieving against each of these aims: - Development of academic practice - inspire and support effective practice in learning and teaching - Teacher excellence - recognise, reward and accredit excellence - Institutional strategy and change - influence policy, future thinking and change - Organisational effectiveness - develop an effective, sustainable organisation relevant to and valued by HE</p>

Review Scope	Key Lines of Enquiry
	Evidence of policy change / enhancements to learning and teaching practice cited with HEA influence as a key factor
c. Reviewing the reorganisation of the Academy, in particular, analysing the organisational capacity and effectiveness of the HEA since the recent changes have been implemented. Governance issues and the role of the Board and its sub-committees should also be considered.	<p>How has the HEA sought to re-structure its operations and how does this link back to its strategic objectives?</p> <p>How are HEA's operations configured and how are staff / associates being deployed across activities to meet demand?</p> <p>Perceptions / assessment of level of clarity and focus on what the HEA is seeking to do, and how it is doing it</p> <p>Perceptions / assessment of effectiveness of HEA Board and the SMT</p>
d. Progress since the 2007-08 review; have the issues raised in the Oakleigh report been fully addressed?	<p>Note: question areas to be reflected in supplementary questions relating to the other areas of scope. Previous recommendation areas included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic focus Approach to relationship and comms management Business strategy Subject Network Support to individual academics
e. The success of the Academy in meeting the priorities and objectives set by the funding bodies, and success in dealing with the challenges of increasing policy divergence between the four nations.	<p>How have the priorities and objectives of each of the four funding bodies been developed and where do these inter-relate / diverge?</p> <p>How has the HEA set up its systems and processes to monitor progress against the funding bodies' priority areas?</p> <p>How does the HEA manage the respective areas of divergence between the four nations in planning activity to meet conditions of funding?</p> <p>Perceptions / assessment of effectiveness of HEA in meeting each of the funding bodies' priorities over the period</p> <p>How is the HEA seeking to balance the priorities and objectives set by the funding bodies with wider sector priorities (as evidenced by sector feedback and other research)?</p>
f. Performance against the Academy's Strategic Plan 2008-2012, and the 2012-16 Strategic Plan.	<p>HEA strategic objectives: perceptions / assessment of success in achieving against each of these aims (see also above under (b))</p> <p>How has the HEA set up its operations and activities to meet its strategic objectives in both plans?</p> <p>How is the HEA monitoring its own performance against strategic objectives (and how has this developed as part of restructuring / reorganisation)?</p>

Review Scope	Key Lines of Enquiry
<p>g. Efficiency and effectiveness of the distribution of funds and value for money, i.e. are funding levels appropriate, is funding being appropriately allocated internally (i.e. funding body grants are spent in proportion to other sources of income, such as from subscriptions and contracted services, and the latter are not being used disproportionately to build reserves, for example), and is the duplication of funding avoided?</p>	<p>Perceptions / assessment of clarity of approach taken by the HEA to allocate its resources to grant-funded activity</p>
	<p>Perceptions / assessment of success in achieving and demonstrating 'value for money' to the sector</p>
	<p>How is the HEA managing the allocation of funding to respective streams of activity and how is it monitoring spend against funding streams?</p>
<p>h. Sustainability of the Academy – including the potential for diversifying or strengthening income streams.</p>	<p>How is the HEA using evidence from the sector for identifying demand in relation to potential alternative income streams?</p>
	<p>How is the HEA proposing to allocate resources and capacity to new or emerging income streams?</p>
	<p>How is the HEA working to ensure that it can satisfy funding bodies' priorities whilst developing capacity to deliver to new or emerging income streams?</p>
	<p>Perceptions / assessment of effectiveness of HEA's approach to identifying sector demand for new or updated service areas</p>
	<p>What are HEA's projections of balance of income sources from funding bodies / other sources, and what is the rationale for this?</p>

2.4 Modes of consultation

The review took a 'mixed modes' approach to consultation to ensure a sufficiently broad reach to the sector. The primary consultative routes are summarised in Figure 2 below and the main priority stakeholder groups for the review are included.

Figure 2 - Modes of consultation against stakeholder group

Stakeholder group	Priority Stakeholders included	Modes of consultation
Senior managers within institutions responsible for learning and teaching strategy (PVCs, DVCs, VPs and equivalent roles)	<p>Invitations were issued to all UK HEIs and FECs with HE provision via: the HEA's subscriber network and via the four funding bodies and owners (UUK and Guild HE) and sector agencies including Universities Scotland, Mixed Economy Group, HE Wales</p> <p>Invitations to selection of HEIs for visits</p>	<p>Written responses to structured lines of enquiry</p> <p>Telephone interviews</p> <p>Electronic survey</p> <p>Focus groups for HEIs and FE providers in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland (co-facilitated by HEFCW and HE Wales; Colleges Wales; SFC and Universities Scotland; and DELNI)</p> <p>Focus group for FE providers in England (co-facilitated by the Mixed Economy Group)</p> <p>Face to face interviews at visits to a selection of HEIs (x 6)</p>
Heads of Institutions	Invitations via: HEA's networks; UUK and GuildHE; Mixed Economy Group	<p>Written responses to structured lines of enquiry</p> <p>Telephone interviews</p> <p>Face to face interviews at visits to a selection of HEIs (x 6) - completed for selected Heads of institution</p>
<p>Other institutional consultees including:</p> <p>Heads of Educational Development / Learning and Teaching units</p> <p>Academics working within specific disciplines</p> <p>Individual Fellows and staff involved in HEA activities and projects</p>	<p>Invitations via: HEA's subject networks</p> <p>Invitations to selection of HEIs for visits.</p>	<p>Telephone interviews</p> <p>Electronic survey</p> <p>Face to face interviews at visits to a selection of HEIs (x 6)</p>
Funders	Funding Councils	Face to face interviews
Owners	UUK and Guild HE	Face to face / phone interviews
Other sector agencies, professional bodies and interested parties	Invitations via: HEA's networks; publication of routes for consultation via the four funding bodies	<p>Written responses to structured lines of enquiry</p> <p>Telephone interviews</p> <p>Electronic survey</p>

2.5 Institutional consultations

The review team sought to invite all UK HEIs and further education providers to be involved in the consultation and our target was for meaningful and in-depth engagement with at least 50 institutions through the mixed modes approach of: institutional visits; structured e-surveys and telephone surveys; and facilitated workshops. Specifically, we targeted: senior managers with a remit for learning and teaching; heads of institutions; learning and teaching specialists and discipline specialists. To maximise review team time and to mitigate consultative burden on the sector, we sought opportunities where appropriate to consult with institutions through pre-existing fora and events.

Institutional visits aimed to provide a more in-depth 'vertical slice' through the levels of engagement that the HEA has with individual institutions and teaching practitioners within these institutions.

APPENDIX 2: CONSULTEES

1. Consultations

Overall, we have engaged with 122 institutions in the course of this review, comprising:

- 33 Post-1992 HEIs
- 39 Pre-1992 HEIs
- 42 HE in FE providers
- 8 other (including: 2 private providers and 6 specialist institutions)
- By nation: 90 from England; 9 from Scotland; 16 from Wales; 7 from Northern Ireland
- By mission group:
 - Russell Group: 16 of 24 members engaged (1 case study visit; 2 via focus groups alone; 5 via survey alone; 4 via survey and written responses from SMT; 1 via survey and focus group; 3 via interview or written response alone).
 - University Alliance: 13 of 22 members engaged (6 via survey alone; 5 via survey and interview/written response; 1 via survey and focus group).
 - Million+: 9 of 17 members engaged (1 case study visit; 5 via survey alone; 1 via survey and interview; 1 via survey and focus group; 1 via interview alone).

In addition, we have consulted with 30 sector representative bodies, including:

- The HEA's four funding bodies: Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), Scottish Funding Council (SFC), Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) and the Department for Employment and Learning Northern Ireland (DELNI)
- The HEA's owners: Universities UK and GuildHE
- Academy of Marketing
- Action on Access (AoA)
- Association of University Administrators (AUA)
- Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP)
- College Development Network
- The Centre for Recording Achievement (CRA)
- Department of Business, Innovation & Skills Economics Network (BIS)
- The Economics Network
- Equality Challenge Unit (ECU)
- English Learning and Sustainability Alliance (ELSA)
- Heads of Educational Development Group (HEDG)
- Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI)
- HE Wales
- Jisc
- Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (LFHE)
- National Union of Students (NUS)

- The Mixed Economy Group (MEG)
- Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)
- QAA Scotland
- Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA)
- University and College Union (UCU)
- Universities Scotland
- TechDis
- 1994 Group

2. Consultation routes

Survey

An online survey was conducted as part of the consultation between mid-September and end of October 2013. A targeted sample group of respondents was collated comprising HEA institutional subscribers and HE sector related stakeholders. HEA issued an email with a link to the survey to their subscribers and Universities UK and GuildHE notified all their members. Recipients were invited to respond themselves and/or circulate the survey invitation to colleagues, so as to create the widest possible sample group. They were also offered the alternative of contacting the evaluation team if they preferred to take part in a telephone interview instead, which a small number opted to do.

The questionnaire contained a small number of quantitative questions, but was mainly qualitative (see questions in Appendix 3). It was divided into three sections focussing on: the individual respondent and their role; their institution or organisation; and their discipline (where relevant).

In total, 224 individuals responded to the questionnaire, from 81 organisations, 72 of which were HE providers, and 9 were sector representatives, professional or discipline bodies. A small number of institutional respondents had collated and submitted collective responses on behalf of their faculty, department or organisation, but the majority were completed by individuals.

Responses were broken down as:

- 35% from Pre-1992 HEIs
- 26% from Post-1992 HEIs
- 17% from HE in FE providers
- 1% from private sector providers
- 10% from small and specialist institutions
- 11% from sector representative bodies

Interviews and written responses

A total of 24 sector bodies (including the four funding bodies and the owners of the HEA) were interviewed or provided written responses to the consultation. Nine sector bodies also responded to the survey, of which four had already been interviewed.

28 institutions were interviewed or provided written responses to the consultation (comprising a mixture of heads of institution and senior management responsible for institutional learning and teaching strategy). This comprised:

- 11 Post-1992 institutions
- 13 Pre-1992 institutions
- 3 HE in FE providers
- 1 private sector HE provider

Interviews have been held with the HEA's executive team and team leads, and, individually, with members of its Board.

Focus groups

Five separate focus groups were held during September, October and November 2013:

- In Northern Ireland, hosted by the Department for Employment and Learning Northern Ireland (DELNI) – 3 HEIs and 4 further education colleges in attendance.
- In Scotland, hosted by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) – 3 HEIs and Universities Scotland in attendance.
- In Wales, hosted by HE Wales (for their Learning & Teaching Advisory Group) – 9 HEIs in attendance.
- In Wales, hosted by Colegaucymru – 6 HE in FE providers, 3 HEIs, and 4 sector bodies in attendance.
- In England, hosted by the Mixed Economy Group – 27 HE in FE providers and 4 sector bodies in attendance.

Case study institutional visits

Interviews conducted during visits to the six institutions selected for institutional case studies. During our visits, we conducted interviews onsite with a mixture of the following:

- Senior staff with remit and oversight for the institution's learning and teaching enhancement strategy.
- Other key staff involved in HEA-supported or funded activity (such as change programmes).
- Staff involved in institutional projects and programmes to support the enhancement of learning and teaching and/or the student experience.
- Staff involved in the accreditation of HEA-endorsed programmes.
- Heads of school or programme leads (those who had engaged with HEA activity).
- National Teaching Fellows at the institution (if applicable).

APPENDIX 3: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is your name?
2. What is the name of your institution / organisation?
3. Which of the following best describes your current role?

Head of Learning and Teaching strategy within an institution	
Dean of Faculty / Head of School within an institution	
Head of Department within an institution	
Other Academic member of staff	
Educational Development specialist	
Policy specialist	
Other (please specify)	

Please comment on the following three aspects of your institution's / organisation's relationship with the HEA in the period for review (academic year 2010/11 – present):

4. The character of this relationship / partnership
5. The effectiveness of the HEA's management of the relationship
6. Any observed key changes in this period
7. What is your assessment in the period under review (2010/11 – present) of the relevance of the HEA's approach to the following?

	Completely relevant	Very relevant	Moderately relevant	Slightly relevant	Not at all relevant
Supporting learning and teaching practice and strategy for your institution/ organisation					
Supporting individual recognition, reward and					

accreditation for excellent teaching					
Influencing policy, future thinking and change					

Please provide reasons for your responses

8. What is your assessment in the period under review (2010/11 – present) of the quality of the HEA's approach to the following?

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
Supporting learning and teaching practice and strategy for your institution/ organisation					
Supporting individual recognition, reward and accreditation for excellent teaching					
Influencing policy, future thinking and change					

Please give reasons for your responses

9. To what extent has the HEA helped your institution / organisation with the following? (Please indicate one option per row)

	Greatly	Very much	Moderately	Slightly	Not at all
Raise awareness on the importance of learning and teaching					
Increase levels of understanding or knowledge in respect of learning and teaching enhancement					
Enable positive changes to practice or policy					

Please provide examples where possible to explain your responses

10. To what extent do you agree that the HEA's services are unique, i.e. the same outcome could not have been achieved without HEA's support?

Strongly agree	
Agree	
Neither agree nor disagree	

Disagree	
Strongly disagree	

Please give reason(s) for your response

11. What are your views on the type of support that your institution / organisation will need in developing learning and teaching strategy in the next 5 + years, and why?

12. How well do you see the HEA positioned to respond to further sector needs in this respect?

13. What is your primary discipline / specialist area? (Please indicate one option)

Art & Design		Education		History		Media & Communications		Psychology	
Biological Sciences		Engineering		Hospitality, Leisure, Sport, and Tourism		Medicine and Dentistry		Religious and Philosophical Studies	
Built Environment		English		Languages		Music, Dance, Drama and Performing Arts		Social Work & Social Policy	
Business and Management		Finance and Accounting		Law		Nursing		Sociology	
Computer Sciences		Geography, Earth, and Environmental Sciences		Marketing		Physical Sciences		Veterinary medicine	
Economics		Health related Studies		Mathematics, Statistics & Operational Research		Politics		Not applicable	
								Other (please specify)	

14. How would you assess the relevance of the HEA's support to your discipline in the period for review (2010/11 – present)?

Completely relevant	
Very relevant	
Moderately relevant	
Slightly relevant	
Not at all relevant	

15. How would you assess the quality of the HEA's support to your discipline in the period for review (2010/11 – present)?

Excellent	
Good	
Average	
Fair	
Poor	

Please provide reason(s) for your response

In what ways has the HEA's discipline-related support added value for:

16. You as an individual?

17. Your organisation?

18. Sector as a whole?

19. Please use this space to provide any additional comments on the HEA and particularly what you would like to see coming out of the review:

APPENDIX 4: SURVEY FINDINGS

1. Overview

1.1 Survey design

As part of the consultation, the evaluation team also carried out an online survey of HE providers and sector representative, professional and disciplinary bodies between mid-September and end of October 2013.

A targeted sample group of respondents was collated comprising HEA institutional subscribers and HE sector related stakeholders. The HEA issued an email with a link to the survey to their subscribers and Universities UK and GuildHE notified all their members. Recipients were invited to respond themselves and/or circulate the survey invitation to colleagues, so as to create the widest possible sample group. They were also offered the alternative of contacting the evaluation team if they preferred to take part in a telephone interview instead, which a small number opted to do.

The questionnaire contained a small number of quantitative questions, but was mainly qualitative (see questions in Appendix 3). It was divided into three sections focussing on: the individual respondent and their role; their institution or organisation; and their discipline (where relevant).

1.2 Response rate and analysis framework

In total 224 individuals responded to the questionnaire from 81 organisations. Of these 72 were HE providers and 9 were sector representative, professional or discipline bodies. A small number of institutional respondents had collated and submitted collective responses on behalf of their faculty, department or organisation, but the majority were completed by individuals on their own behalf.

Most of the questions in the survey were optional; therefore the response rate for individual questions varies as not all respondents completed the full questionnaire. All responses for individual questions were included in the analysis and the numbers are specified.

An analysis framework was developed to better understand the data using the following categorical variables. Original values were re-coded to aid analysis due to small cell numbers in some cases:

- **Home nation** – re-categorised in the main due to small numbers into England and ‘other home nations’.
- **Type of organisation** – re-categorised into ‘sector representative or professional or discipline bodies’, ‘pre-1992 HEIs’, ‘post-1992 HEIs’ and ‘other providers’ (drawn from small and specialist HEIs, HE in FE providers and private providers).
- **Individual’s role** – re-categorised into ‘senior management – institution’, ‘sector representative or professional or discipline bodies’, ‘professional support – institution’ and ‘academic – institution’.
- **Disciplines** – re-categorised into ‘Arts & Humanities’, ‘Social Science’, ‘STEM’, ‘Health & Social care’, ‘Cross-disciplinary’ and ‘Educational development’.

Responses to open questions were also analysed thematically and additional key categories which emerged from the analysis are included in the findings below.

Comments provided by respondents are shown in quotation marks.

1.3 Highlights of the key findings

In summary the main findings from the survey were as follows.

- Character of organisational relationship with the HEA:
 - 45% of respondents held a positive view; 33% were neutral; 12% had mixed views; and 10% were negative.
 - Positive comments highlighted improvements made by the HEA and benefits from the UKPSF. Negative comments focussed predominantly on discipline-related issues, particularly the closure of the subject centres.
- Effectiveness of HEA's management of relationship:
 - 51% were broadly positive; 32% were neutral; 12% were predominantly negative; and 5% were mixed.
 - Mixed views on communications issues (highlighted by 26%); with partnership management issues (26%) – half with a positive and half a negative view.
- Observed key changes in period of review:
 - The balance of responses indicated that there had been an improvement in the past three years, with 18% highlighting there had been improvements in communications from the HEA.
 - 14% mentioned the closure of the subject centres, with all but one respondent indicating this was a negative course.
- Relevance and quality of HEA's approach in terms of the three strategic priorities:
 - Supporting learning and teaching practice and strategy for your institution/organisation – 58% of respondents considered this highly relevant; quality was judged as excellent or good by 64% and fair or poor by 22%.
 - Supporting individual recognition, reward and accreditation for excellent teaching – this is considered the most relevant of the three with 81% of respondents judging it to be highly relevant; while quality was judged as excellent or good by 71% and fair or poor by 20%.
 - Influencing policy, future thinking and change – this is the least relevant with less than half (47%) finding it highly relevant, and 25% judging it of low relevance. Quality was judged as excellent or good by 51% and fair or poor by 26%.
- Contribution of the HEA:
 - Respondents were asked to what extent the HEA has helped institutions/organisations with the following: raising awareness on the importance of learning and teaching; increasing levels of understanding or knowledge in respect of learning and teaching enhancement; and enabling positive changes to practice or policy. Roughly 40% of respondents considered the HEA has helped with each aspect either 'greatly or 'very much', with just over one-third rating it 'moderately'. Around one-quarter of respondents felt that the HEA had contributed either 'slightly' or 'not at all'.
 - Respondents were then asked to what extent they agreed that the HEA's services are unique, i.e. that the same outcome could not have been achieved without HEA's support. Almost two-thirds (61%) of those who responded strongly agreed or agreed that the HEA's services are 'unique' – a good indication of its additionality.
- Future support needs for learning and teaching strategy and development:
 - The majority of responses (28%) were in relation to supporting teaching and learning; funding support was highlighted in 10% of responses: support for

technology enhanced learning was indicated by 9%; accreditation by 7%; and policy development by 7%.

- Other support needs mentioned were: sharing good practice; facilitating networking (5%); staff development (5%); consultancy (4%); discipline level support (4%); engaging academics in CPD (4%); and resources (4%).
- How well positioned the HEA is to respond to further sector needs in respect of developing learning and teaching strategy:
 - Almost half (46%) were positive responses; just over one-third (36%) were more mixed; while 10% were broadly negative.
- Discipline focus:
 - Almost half of respondents consider the HEA's support to their discipline is highly relevant and high quality. However, a sizable minority, 28% say that it is only slightly or not all relevant, and 29% that the support is either fair or poor.
 - Broadly it would seem that perceptions of the relevance and quality of HEA's support to individual disciplines are lower than perceptions of the relevance and quality of support overall. This is particularly the case in terms of the quality of support to discipline.

The results of the detailed analysis are set out below.

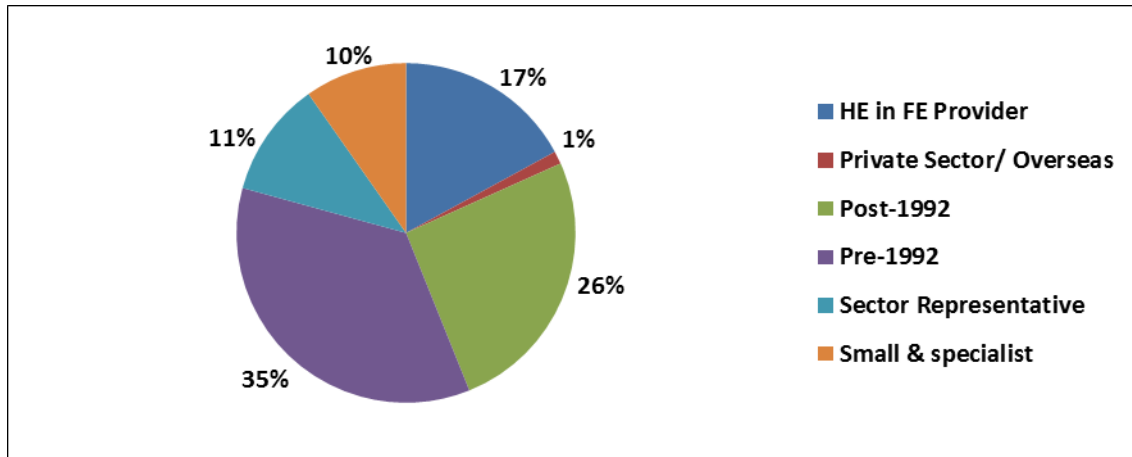
2. Profile of respondents

2.1 Organisation type

Respondents were asked to provide the name of their organisation. Of the 186 respondents who did so, 11% were from a sector representative, professional or disciplinary body, the remainder were from HE providers of different types. HE providers were further categorised as shown in Figure 3 below. The highest proportion, 35%, came from Pre-1992 HEIs, then 26% from Post-1992 HEIs and 17% from HE in FE providers.

For ease of analysis and due to small cell counts, HE in FE, private/overseas and small & specialist providers were later re-categorised as 'Other' providers.

Figure 3 Response by organisation type

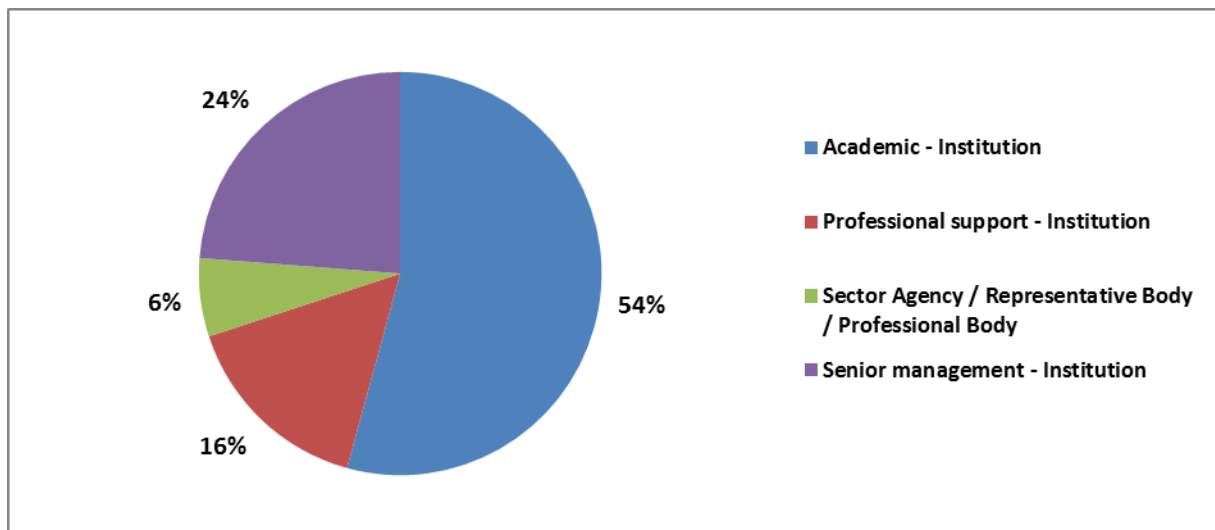


(n=186)

2.2 Role type

Respondents were asked to identify which role from a pre-defined list best described their current role, or they could add their own. All 224 respondents answered this question. The roles were then re-categorised as shown in Figure 4 below. Over half of respondents, 54%, were either academics or academic managers, while one-quarter were senior managers within institutions.

Figure 4 Respondent role

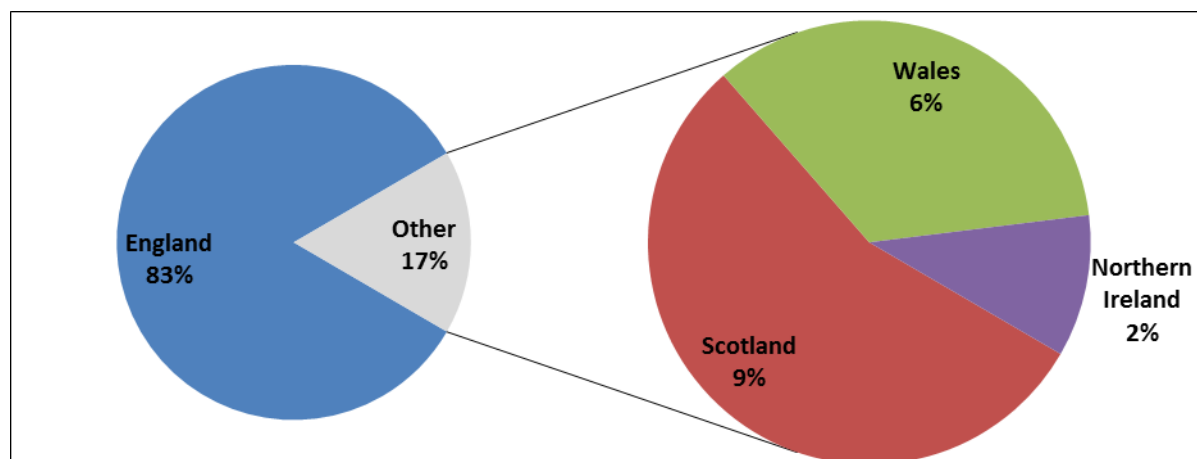


(n=224)

2.3 Home nation

A home nation was assigned to responses where applicable. This applied to 173 of the 224 responses and the breakdown is shown in Figure 5 below. The response rate was in accordance to the relative size of each home nation, with the vast majority, 83%, of respondents coming from England.

Figure 5 Response by home nation



(n=173)

3. Organisational relationship with HEA

Respondents were asked for their perceptions of three aspects of their organisation's relationship with the HEA over the period of the review.

- The character of this relationship or partnership.
- The effectiveness of the HEA's management of the relationship.
- Any observed key changes in the period.

Respectively, 107, 101 and 92 individuals provided a response to these three questions.

3.1 Character of organisational relationship with HEA

A total of 100 responses to the open question could be categorised in terms of whether they were positive, negative, neutral or mixed. Of these:

- 45% were broadly positive about their organisation's relationship with the HEA; examples of comments are shown below in quotation marks:
 - "This relationship has developed considerably over the last twelve months as a result of our wish to work more closely with the HEA. The HEA have provided considerable support for our future aspirations and have invited us to two summits."
 - "Close working relationship with the HEA Marketing Lead on aspects related to research and development".
 - "Dynamic and beneficial, largely as a consequence of the close liaison between ourselves and the Discipline Lead."
 - "We work closely together. We have found the HEA to be very responsive to our needs and requests. We participate in [various meetings] per year. In addition HEA

sits on committees and groups which we run, and we are jointly members of other organisations' committees.”

- 33% were neutral, for instance:
 - “Working together on preparing our staff to submit applications as potential Fellows of the HEA; working together to ensure that our CPD programme for academic staff aligns with the UKPSF.”
- 12% were mixed:
 - “I am actively engaged with the HEA. I have had some discussions about taking forward a project. However, the relationship seems unbalanced, the HEA has obtained the university’s input to some of its activities, but the university has not necessarily obtained very much in return, with the exception of accreditation.”
- 10% were predominantly negative:
 - “Not easy. The value proposition offered by HEA is increasingly disconnected to what we do in institutions.”
 - “The extent of any direct relationship between the HEA and the institution I work at is unclear to me. The HEA has no direct impact on my academic role. Hence, I struggle to see the value of the HEA in its current form.”
 - “I don't believe we have had an awful lot of contact in the last couple of years.”

A thematic analysis of responses found the following issues were mentioned frequently. Example comments are provided below.

- **Trajectory of change of the HEA:**
 - “The relationship is evolving and getting better, but it still tends to be sporadic rather than a true partnership. This may be partially due to changing roles within our team, as well as changes within HEA.”
- **Discipline issues:**
 - “In Economics, our key relationship is with the Economics Network, which was formerly supported by HEA. It was a great disappointment when the HEA closed down the subject centres. Since that point we have not had any meaningful support from HEA.”
- **UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF):**
 - “Hard to assess, but characterised by some good engagement on some issues. Not surprisingly a small number of staff are highly engaged, but the vast majority are not. Clear strong influence on UKPSF and this has strengthened some aspects of the relationship.”
 - “HEA is looked to for guidance and synthesis of sectoral views for example the HEA Professional Standards Framework are being incorporated or at least mapped against our internal equivalent.”

Further analysis of the nature of individuals’ perceptions of the character of their organisational relationship or partnership with the HEA was undertaken by the following variables (see Figures 6-9 below):

- **Organisational type:**
 - There was some variation evident in the patterns of response by the different types of organisation in the sample.
 - Post-1992 institutions had the most positive view (75%), followed by sector representative and other bodies (71%).

- Over half of 'Other' types of institution (i.e. small and specialist institutions, HE in FE providers and alternate providers) had a positive view (56%), while one-quarter had mixed views, and 13% were negative.
- The views among Pre-1992 institutions were the least positive, with 39% expressing a positive view, the largest group, 45%, had a neutral view, and 12% were predominantly negative.
- **Individual role:**
 - Sector, representative or professional organisations are the most positive about the character of their organisational relationship/partnership (83%).
 - Senior managers within HE providers are also very positive (69%), followed by professional service staff within institutions (63%).
 - Almost half of the academic group is neutral, just under one-third have a positive view (30%), but this group has the highest negative perception (20%).
- **Home nation:**
 - Almost half (47%) of those identified as from English organisations were positive about the relationship with 37% having more neutral views.
 - Taken together due to small numbers, respondents from organisations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland were more positive about the relationship (68%).
- **Discipline:**
 - There was some variation evident in the patterns of response by different disciplines, although the numbers were relatively small (particularly in Health & Social Care), so should be treated cautiously.
 - Those from Arts & Humanities disciplines and educational developers were the most positive about their organisational relationship with HEA, 83% and 74% respectively.
 - There was more of a mixed response among Social Science respondents, with the majority positive (58%) but this was the highest negative group (32%).
 - STEM and Health & Social Care had the most neutral response (56% and 100%).

Figure 6 Character of relationship by organisation type

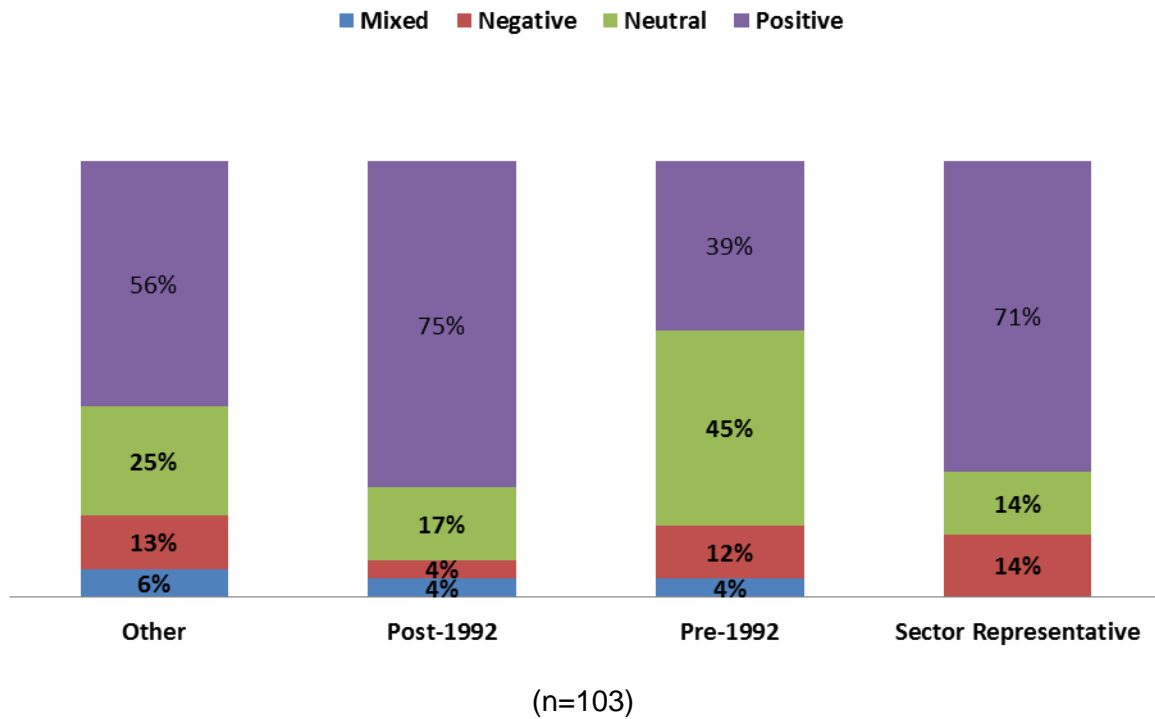


Figure 7 Character of relationship by type of role

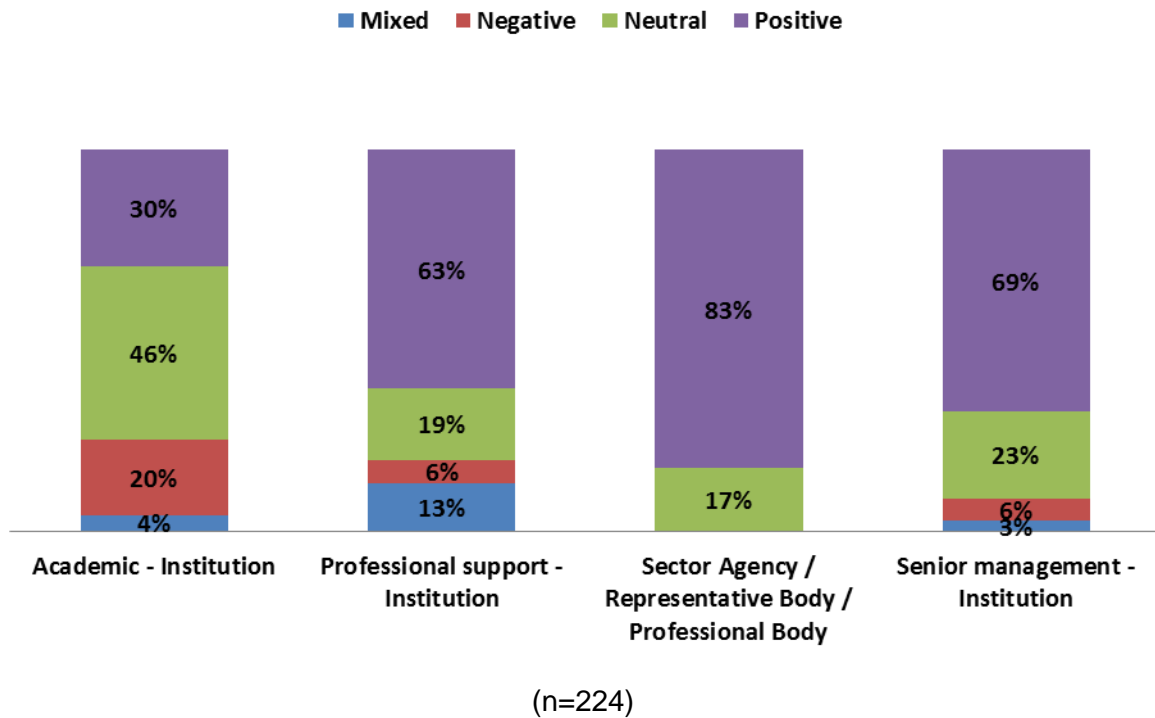


Figure 8 Character of relationship by home nation

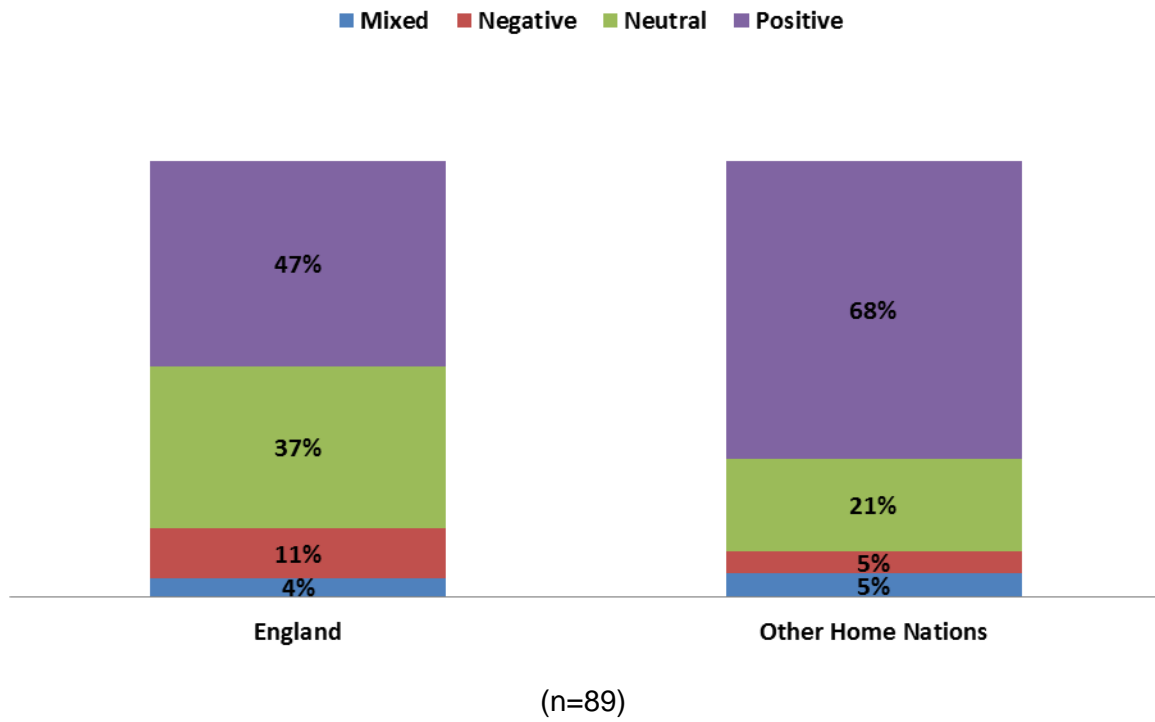
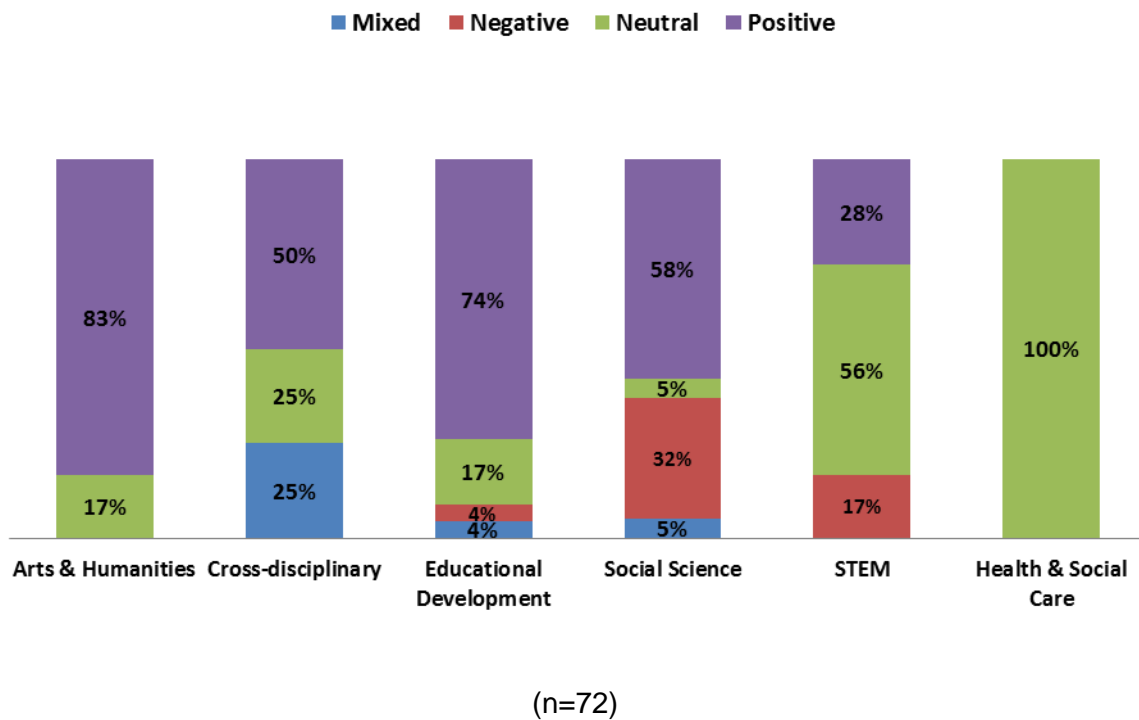


Figure 9 Character of relationship by discipline



3.2 Effectiveness of HEA's management of relationships

A total of 103 open text responses could be categorised in terms of whether their perception of the effectiveness of HEA's management of the relationship were positive, negative, neutral or mixed. Of these:

- 51% were broadly positive about the HEA's effective management of the relationship, examples include the following comments:
 - "HEA manages the relationship effectively; they are very responsive to our needs and requests, and deliver objectives effectively."
 - "Good, although some communications perhaps could have been handled better. That said the communication has improved greatly within the last year or so."
- 12% were predominantly negative, for instance:
 - "I think the HEA's management is ineffective in managing the relationship with the university. The senior university management never seem to feel it appropriate to share HEA work with staff, and the HEA seems little interested in communicating directly with academics."
 - "Patchy. No engagement for over a year, then some engagement with fees, then difficult to get a response as waiting for partnership managers to be appointed. We had a seminar to discuss developments with partners in HE in FE but no clear evidence of outcomes from this."
- 32% were neutral and 5% were mixed.

The thematic analysis of responses found the following issues most frequently mentioned.

- **Communications issues** were referred to by 26% of those responding. The following are some example comments:
 - "We are contacted regularly by a named member of staff."
 - "Very good at level of pushing out communication to the institution."
 - "There were some actions taken in response to feedback at the last partnership meeting, but on previous occasions, no action was taken in response to verbal and written comments. The accreditation team has given conflicting information to programme teams over the last couple of years regarding requirements and dates for accreditation of postgraduate certification programmes. Similarly, there have been confused messages given in relation to bids. One frustration is that you rarely get to speak to the same person twice and there appears to be little sharing of information between HEA colleagues such that the person who picks up the call rarely has knowledge of ongoing matters and you have to brief them from the beginning. Frequently, you have to chase up a response."
- **Partnership management issues** were highlighted by 25% of those responding to this question, with roughly half with a positive and half a negative view. The following are example comments at each extreme:
 - "Our relationship with the HEA is managed in a highly effective manner. Our relationship with our Partnership Manager is particularly productive and feedback from colleagues who both liaise with and take advantage of opportunities offered by the HEA, is positive. Our current involvement with the HEA spans a range of activities: accredited programmes and our accredited CPD Framework, CPD provision for the support and development of academic practice, NTF awards grants and funding survey work to shape policy successes. A wide range of ad-hoc information, advice and guidance is also sought from the HEA. These activities are all managed very effectively."

- “With the HEA being in transition, I don't feel that any management of the relationship has been achieved by the HEA specifically. I have had to go out of my way to manage the relationship myself (e.g. contacting the HEA, requesting collaboration on points of business, etc.). This is true both for my position internally within the university and without.”

Further analysis of the nature of individuals' perceptions of the effectiveness of their organisational relationship or partnership with the HEA was undertaken by the following variables (see Figures 10-13 below):

- **Organisational type**
 - Post-1992 and sector organisations were extremely positive about the effectiveness of the relationship (87% and 71%) and over half of 'other' organisations (a mix of different types of HE providers) were positive.
 - Pre-1992 institutions had a more mixed view; 41% neutral and 39% positive.
- **Individual role**
 - All role types were positive overall in their assessment of the effectiveness of HEA's management of the relationship.
 - Academics were more mixed in their response than other roles, with around one-third having a positive view, 45% a neutral view and 14% a negative view.
- **Home nation**
 - Respondents from all home nations were favourable in their view, with those from England being a bit less so than those from the other home nations combined – 52%:68%.
- **Discipline**
 - Again there is some variation in the response by discipline although the numbers were relatively small, so should be treated cautiously.
 - Those from Arts & Humanities and Educational Development were most positive, and STEM and Health & Social Care more mixed.

Figure 10 Character of relationship by organisation type

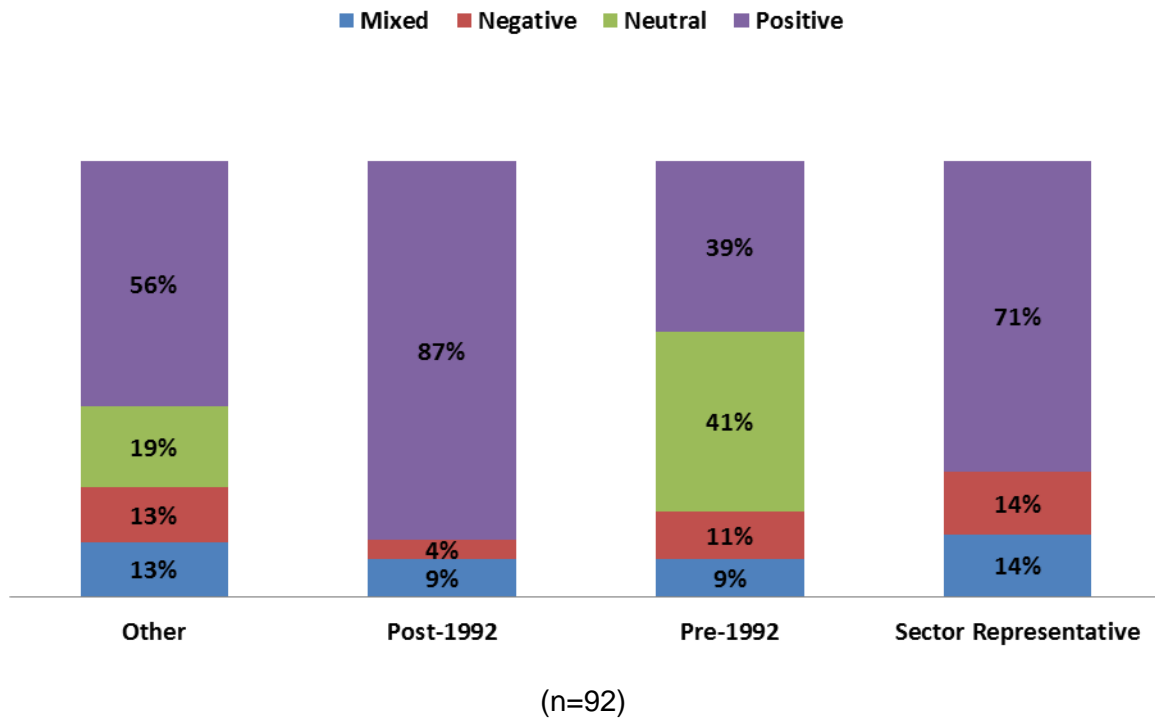


Figure 11 Effectiveness of relationship by type of role

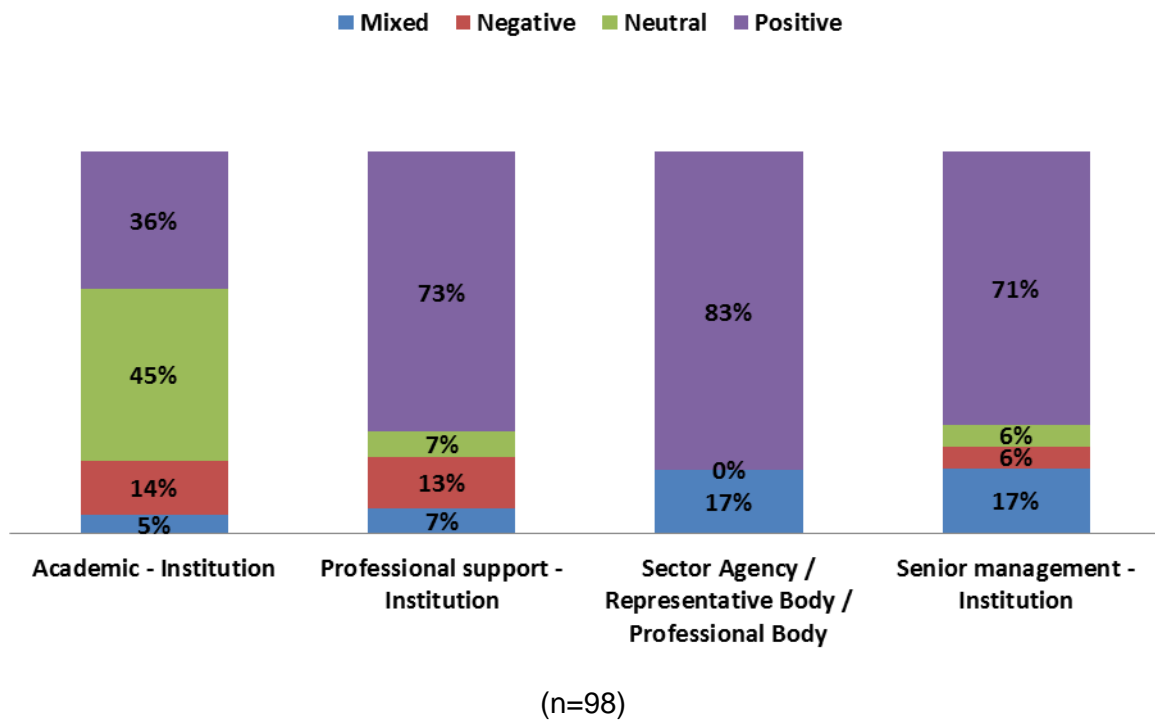
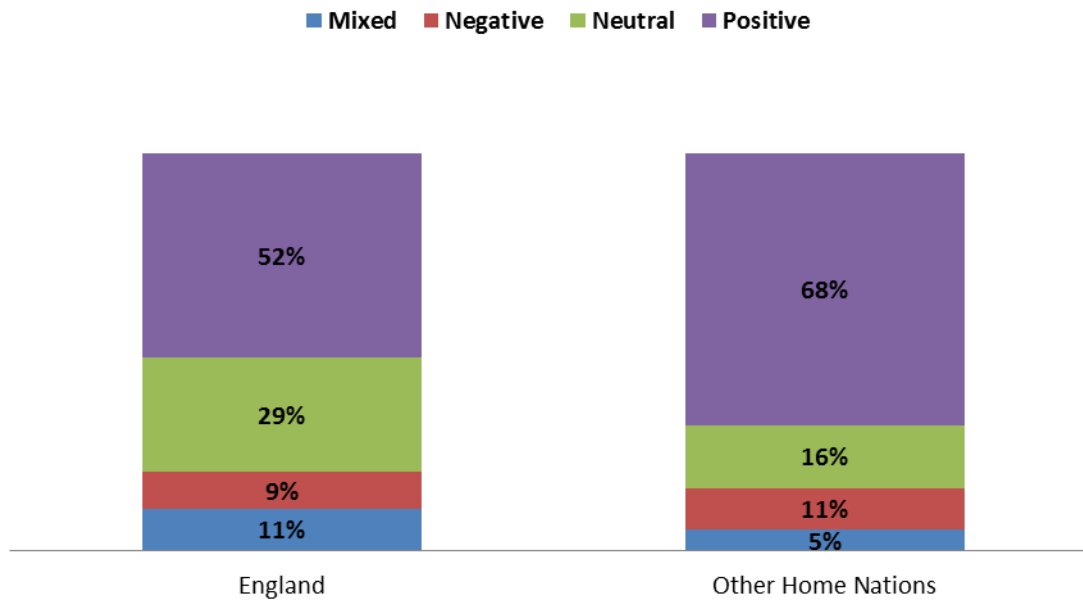
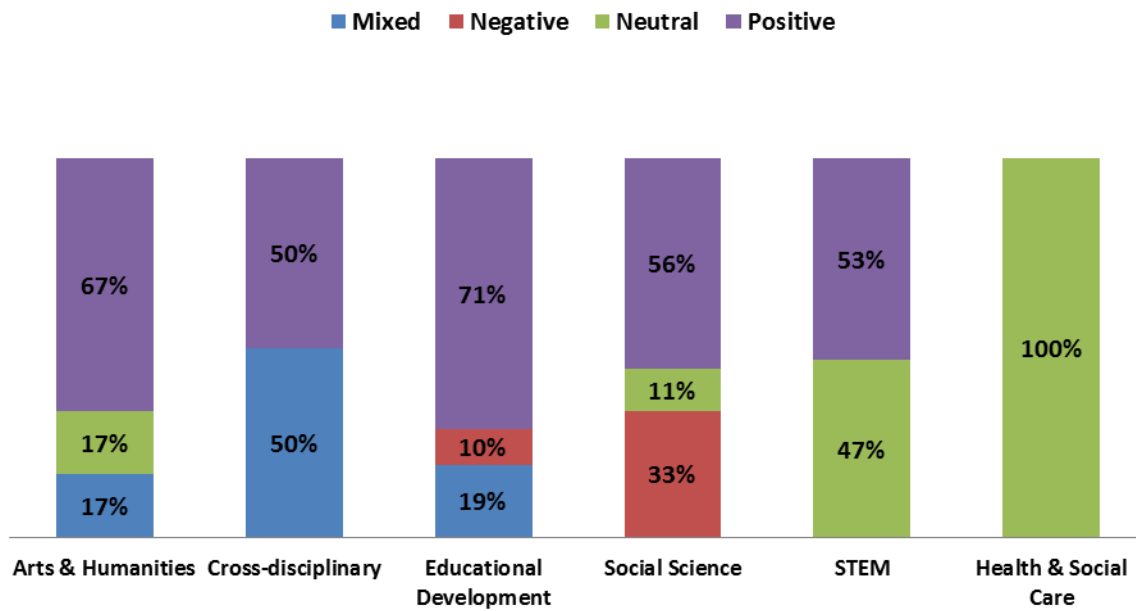


Figure 12 Effectiveness of relationship by home nation



(n=85)

Figure 13 Effectiveness of relationship by discipline



(n=64)

3.3 Any observed key changes in this period

A total of 92 responses were received to this question. The balance of responses indicated that there had been an improvement in the past three years, with 18% highlighting mainly improvements in communications from the HEA. The following are some example comments:

- “There has been an overall improvement from 2010/11 to the present in terms of regular contact with the HEA. This is evidenced through the wide range of HEA activities with which we now engage.”
- “Roles and responsibilities seem to be more clearly defined and better communicated.”
- “Strong improvement in the position of the HEA within the institution primarily because they have refocused on the things that the sector really needs – funding for learning and teaching research, scholarship and practice; conduits for disciplinary pedagogical specialism; accreditation processes – but I still have questions about how HEA can provide more in return to its broader membership of FHEAs (Fellows of the HEA) who don't pursue funds or the discipline leads, but who value teaching enough that something directly linked to FHEA relevant to them would be good. I am just not sure what would be best – HEA already does offer a lot for the amount of total funding it receives from its subscription/funding council funding.”

14% mentioned the closure of the subject centres, with all but one respondent indicating this was a negative course. The following are some example comments:

- “The loss of subject centres has probably massively reduced HEA's visibility with the bulk of academics and exposed a gap in provision from the HEA for discipline-specific support, but HEA policy documents are having a visible impact.”
- “The move away from subject centres has been traumatic for many; it may be a necessity of funding cuts but it has not been popular.”
- “We were worried about the demise of the specialist subject centres, but there seems to be more central contact with the university now that there are more centralised HEA discipline clusters. There is less individualised contact between staff members and very small disciplinary units in the HEA, and that seems to allow for wider advertising of what is happening.”

3% mentioned capacity issues and concerns that funding cuts at HEA were having a detrimental affect due to perceptions of HEA staff being overstretched:

- “It feels like HEA staff are being asked to do more and more!”
- “Workload of HEA staff appears to have increased substantially... There has been a lot of movement in senior management at the HEA as well, which adds to this concern.”

4. Relevance and quality of HEA's approach

In the next two questions, respondents were asked to provide an assessment (in the period since 2010/11) in respect of the HEA's relevance of approach and quality of approach in respect of the following three strategic priorities:

- Supporting learning and teaching practice and strategy for your institution/organisation.
- Supporting individual recognition, reward and accreditation for excellent teaching.
- Influencing policy, future thinking and change.

4.1 Relevance of HEA

The pattern of response on the relevance of the HEA in respect of each strategic objective is shown below. Overall, as Figure 14 below shows, the most relevant objective is considered to be Individual recognition, reward and accreditation, followed by Learning and teaching practice and strategy, and then Influencing policy, future thinking and change.

Figure 14 Relevance of the HEA

Response	Learning and teaching practice and strategy	Individual recognition, reward and accreditation	Influencing policy, future thinking and change
Completely relevant	24%	32%	17%
Very relevant	34%	39%	30%
Moderately relevant	20%	14%	28%
Slightly relevant	10%	7%	14%
Not at all relevant	12%	9%	11%

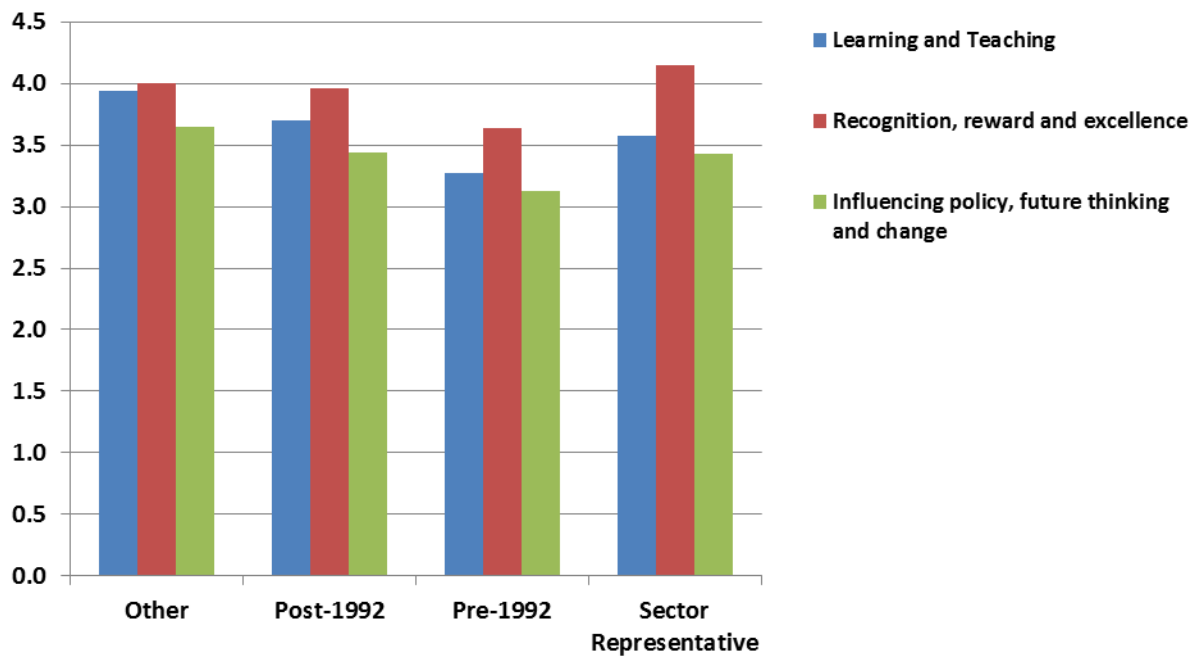
(n=105)

Further analysis of the nature of individuals' perceptions of the relevance is given below, by organisation type, individual role, home nation and discipline.

Figure 15 below shows some variation of the perceptions of relevance by type of organisation. For all types of organisation, Supporting individual recognition, reward and accreditation for excellent teaching is the most relevant of HEA's objectives, but this is less relevant for Pre-1992 HEIs than other organisational types. Pre-1992 institutions also rate the relevance of the other two objectives lower.

All types of organisation perceived Influencing policy, future thinking and change as less relevant than the other two objectives.

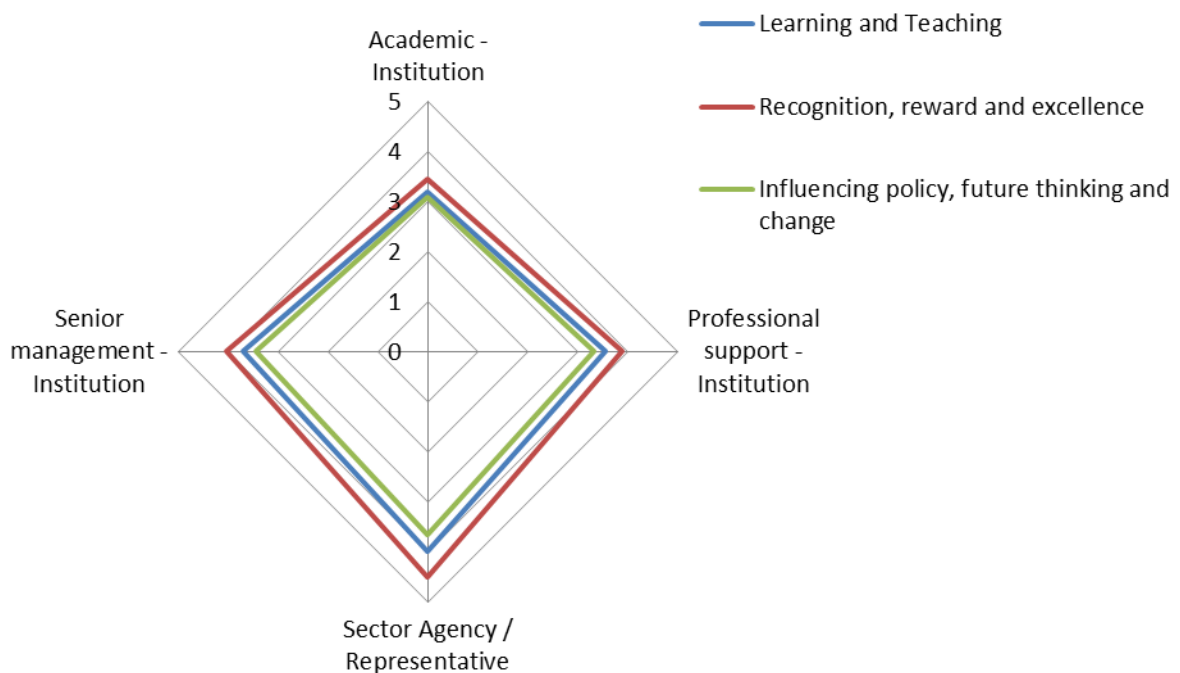
Figure 15 Relevance by organisation type



(1=low relevance and 5=high relevance)

The radar chart in Figure 16 illustrates the relative views of the relevance of the HEA in respect of its strategic objective by different individual roles. Overall, individuals from sector bodies perceive all objectives as more relevant than those from HE providers. Academics consider them to be less relevant than other groups.

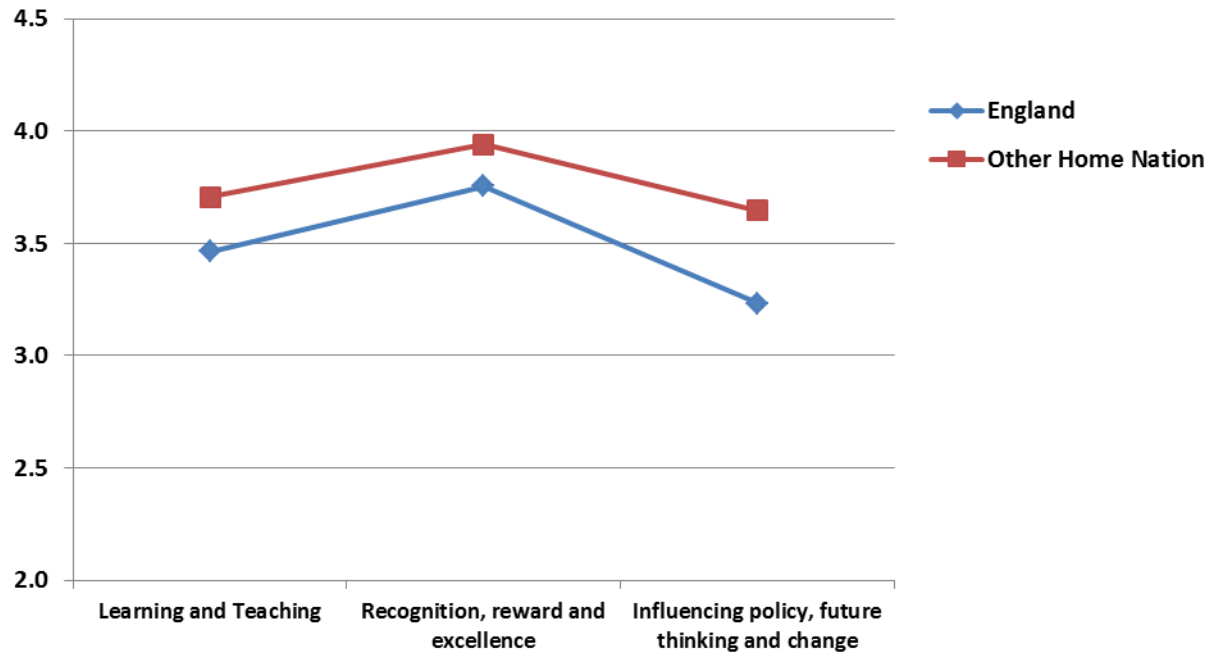
Figure 16 Relevance by individual role



(1=low relevance and 5=high relevance)

The 'other home nations' perceive the relevance of the HEA in respect of each strategic objective as higher than does England. Recognition, reward and excellence is rated highest for all nations in terms of relevance and Influencing policy lowest. Figure 17 below illustrates this.

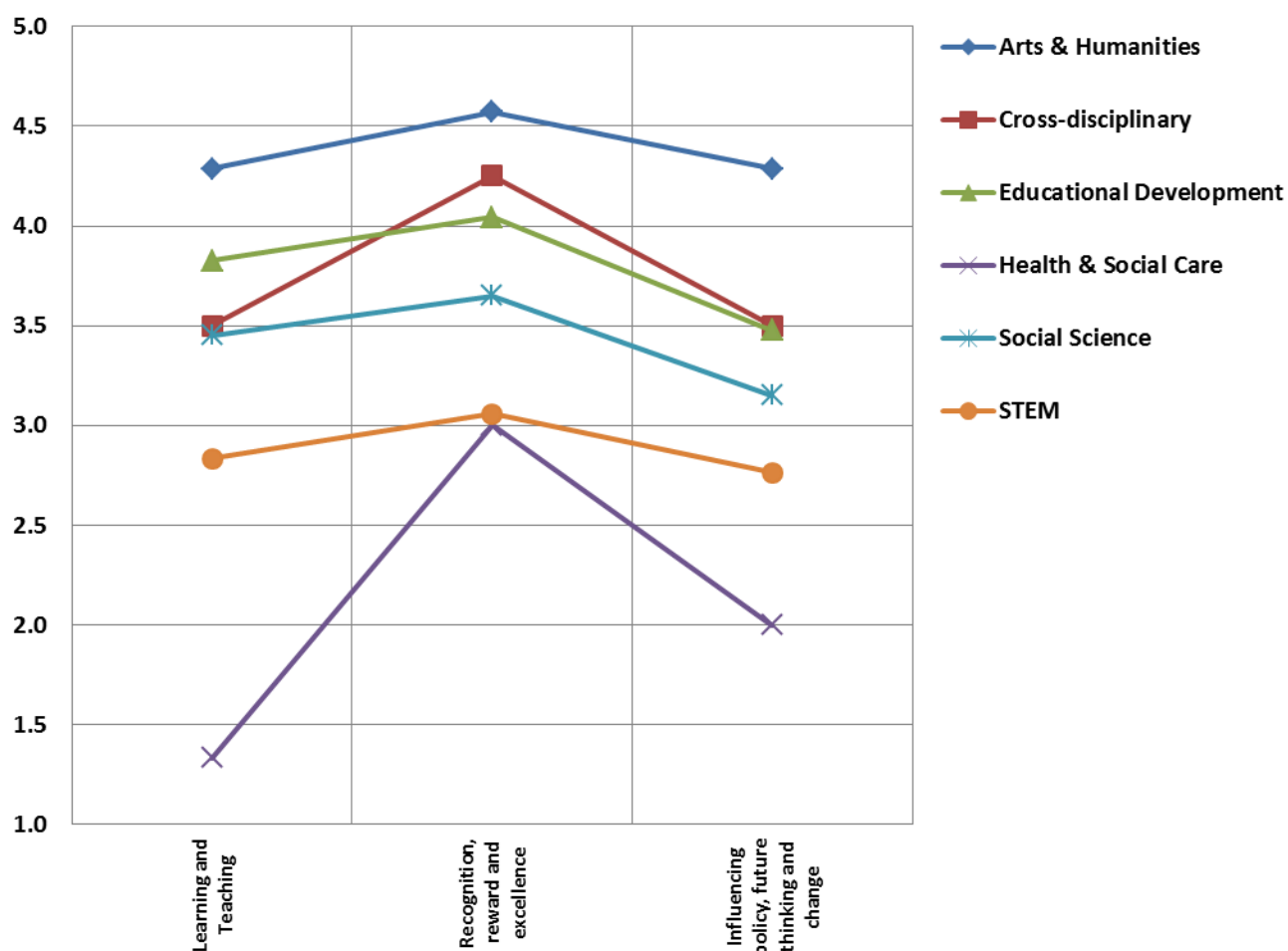
Figure 17 Relevance by home nation



(1=low relevance and 5=high relevance)

There is some variation evident in terms of perceptions of HEA's relevance across the disciplines. Arts & Humanities and Cross-disciplinary respondents rated these higher than others. STEM and Health & Social Care rated the relevance of HEA for all objectives lower than other discipline areas. This is illustrated in Figure 18 below.

Figure 18 Relevance by discipline



(1=low relevance and 5=high relevance)

Respondents were asked to provide reasons for their responses. A thematic analysis found the following most common themes emerging:

- 17% of comments highlighted the relevance of HEA to **improving learning and teaching practice** within institutions. Of these some indicated this was reference to particular types of institution, such as research-led and FE providers of HE, such as:
 - “HEA has provided a lot of great opportunities for people who are very dedicated to teaching in the institution. That was really important because we are really a research institution and don’t have a culture that supports teaching as much. We are moving more towards teaching (slowly), and HEA has been able to support that in various ways (such as the pilot on assessment).”
- 16% of the 76 responses indicated they felt the HEA is **irrelevant** generally, for example as illustrated in the following comments:
 - “Some members of staff have had to become fellows of the HEA for promotion. This was a pure box-ticking exercise. Other than that, it is irrelevant.”
 - “Other than my enrolment with HEA, I have seen very little evidence of its impact on teaching practice in the institution.”

Other key issues mentioned were the **loss of the subject centres** (10%), the benefits of the **UKPSF** (10%), **lack of policy influence** of the HEA (6%), and the **high quality of HEA's recent research** (6%).

4.2 Quality of HEA's approach

The pattern of response on the quality of the HEA's approach in respect of each strategic objective is shown below.

Overall, as Figure 19 below shows, the highest quality of HEA's approach is considered to be around Individual recognition, reward and accreditation (45% consider this to be good, 26% excellent), followed by Learning and teaching practice and strategy. Influencing policy is considered to be excellent or good by just over half of respondents.

Figure 19 Quality of the HEA's approach

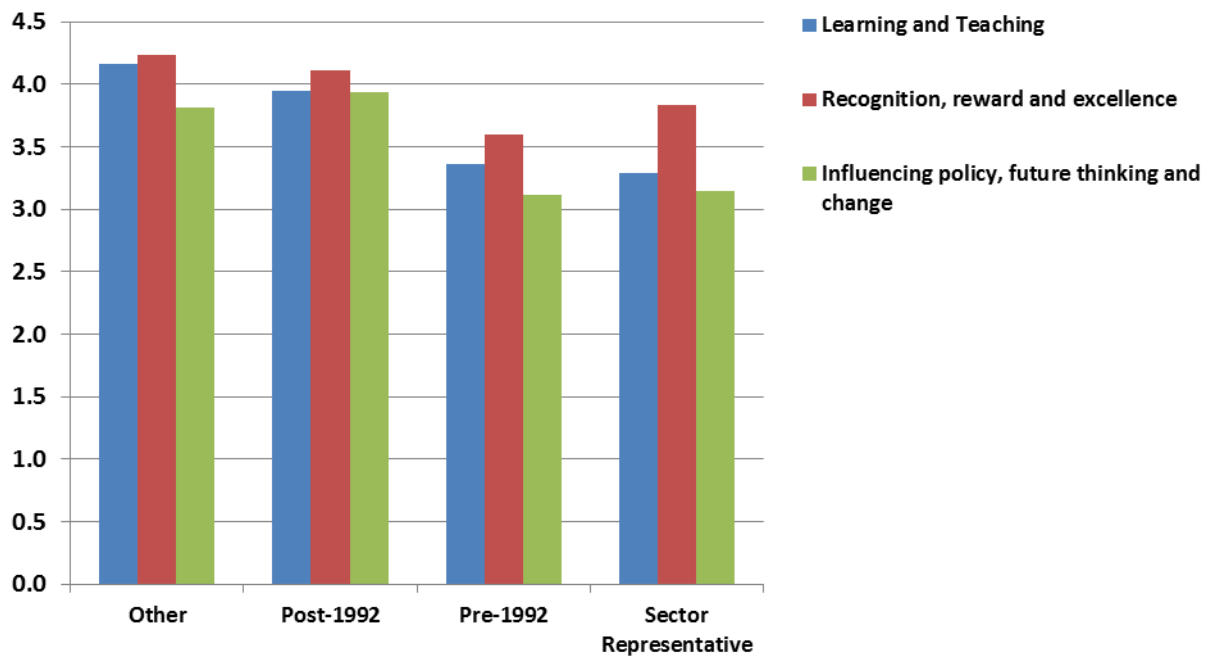
Response	Learning and teaching practice and strategy	Individual recognition, reward and accreditation	Influencing policy, future thinking and change
Excellent	24%	26%	18%
Good	40%	45%	33%
Average	13%	12%	23%
Fair	8%	8%	11%
Poor	14%	8%	15%

(n=103)

Further analysis of the nature of individuals' perceptions of the quality of HEA's approach is shown below, by organisation type, individual role, home nation and discipline.

Figure 20 below shows some variation of the perceptions of relevance by type of organisation. All types of organisation rate the quality of HEA's approach slightly lower than they rate the relevance of its approach in each of the three strategic areas.

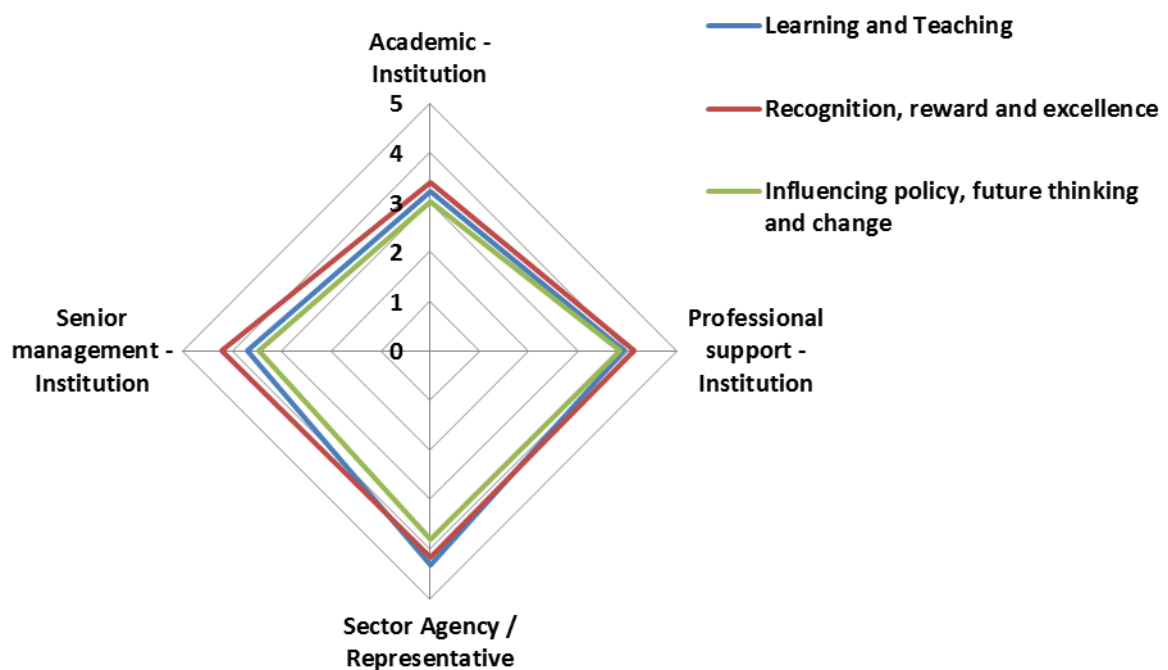
Figure 20 Quality of approach by organisation type



(1=low quality and 5=high quality)

The radar chart in Figure 21 illustrates the relative views of types of the quality of the HEA's approach in respect of its strategic objective by different individual roles. Again the lowest ratings are among academics, in comparison with other roles. Across the board again Influencing policy is rated lower than the quality of approach to other strategic objectives.

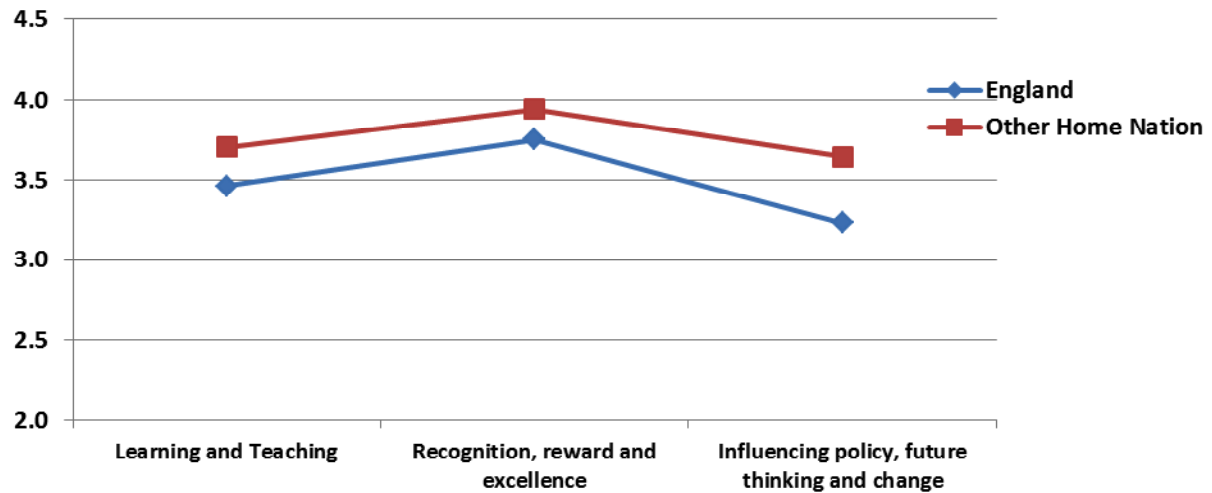
Figure 21 Quality of approach by individual role



(1=low quality and 5=high quality)

The respondents from 'Other home nations' perceive the quality of the HEA's approach in respect of each strategic objective to be higher than those from England. Generally the other home nations have rated quality of approach as lower than relevance of approach, while in for England there is less variation between the two. Figure 22 illustrates this.

Figure 22 Quality of approach by home nation

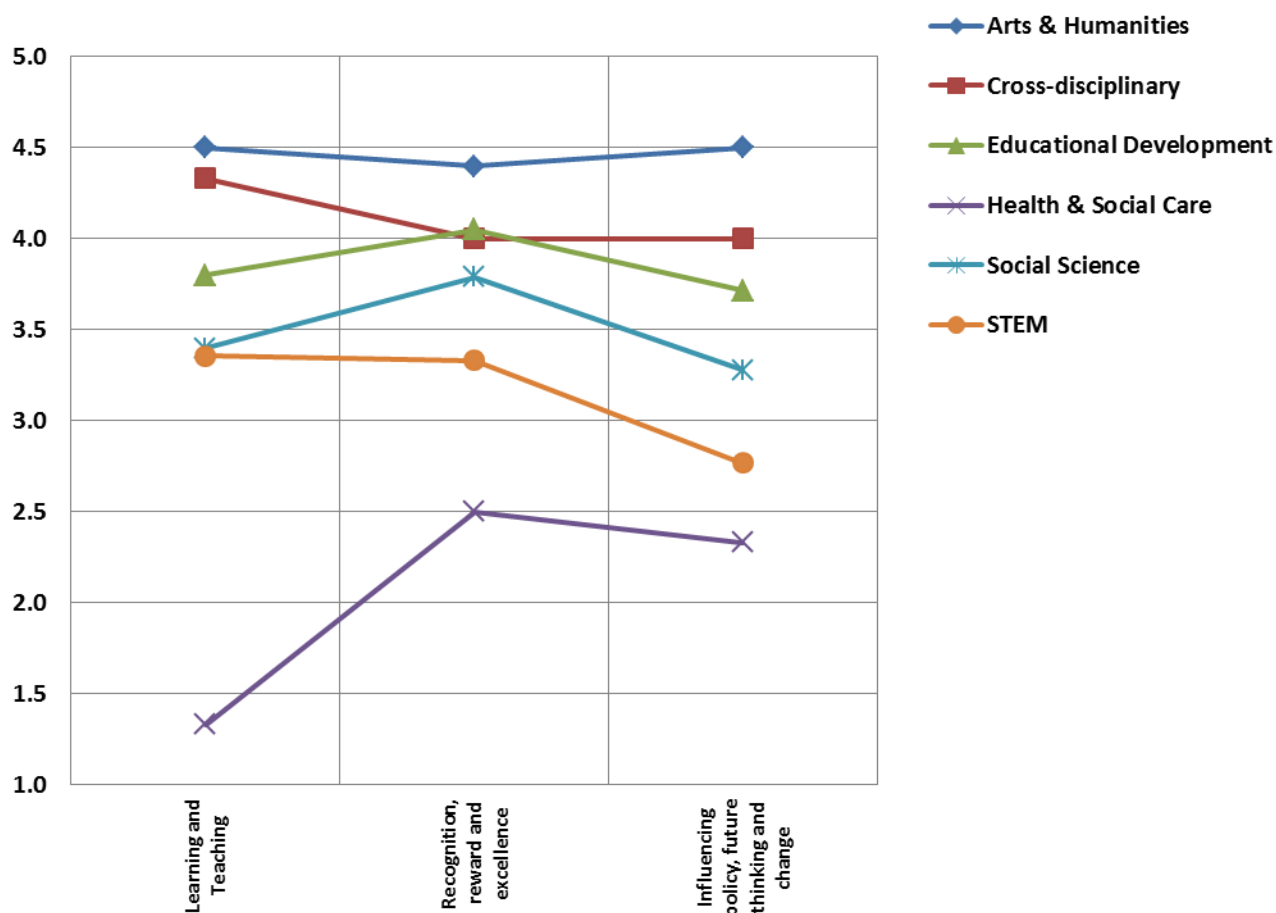


(1=low quality and 5=high quality)

There is some variation evident in terms of perceptions of HEA's quality of approach across the disciplines, similar to that for the relevance ratings above. Interestingly, a number of the disciplines have scored quality of approach slightly higher than relevance of approach.

Arts & Humanities rate Recognition, reward and excellence slightly lower on quality than the other two strategic objectives. Cross-disciplinary respondents also rate Learning & teaching higher than Recognition, reward and excellence. This is illustrated in Figure 23 below.

Figure 23 Quality of approach by discipline



Respondents were asked to provide reasons for their responses and 54 did so and the issues highlighted included the following:

▪ **Quality of approach**

- “In judging the quality of HEA’s approach to supporting learning and teaching practice; supporting individual recognition and influencing policy, the key example to be offered which demonstrates excellent quality is the UKPSF.”
- “More broadly, NTF and UKPSF have had some real impact, as have some policy developments. A number of individuals have benefitted heavily from HEA grants, projects etc., but the impact on learning and teaching has probably been reduced, especially where more experienced staff are concerned. The website is not easy to use, and the loss of subject centres is likely to have led to some disengagement.”
- “Publications have high production values, and are usually helpful and motivational. The HEA could develop a stronger reputation for quality by focusing on the services it provides to institutions in support of transformational dialogue, consultancy and implementation of change.”

▪ **Policy**

- “What the HEA offers is good but it is not clear how their influence goes with policy makers in universities or in government circles.”

5 Contribution of the HEA

The next question asked to what extent the HEA has helped institutions/organisations with the following:

- Raising awareness on the importance of learning and teaching (L&T).
- Increasing levels of understanding or knowledge in respect of learning and teaching enhancement.
- Enabling positive changes to practice or policy.

Roughly 40% of respondents considered the HEA has helped with each aspect either 'greatly' or 'very much', with just over one-third rating it 'moderately'. Around one-quarter of respondents felt that the HEA had contributed either 'slightly' or 'not at all'. This is shown in Figure 24 below.

Figure 24 Contribution of the HEA

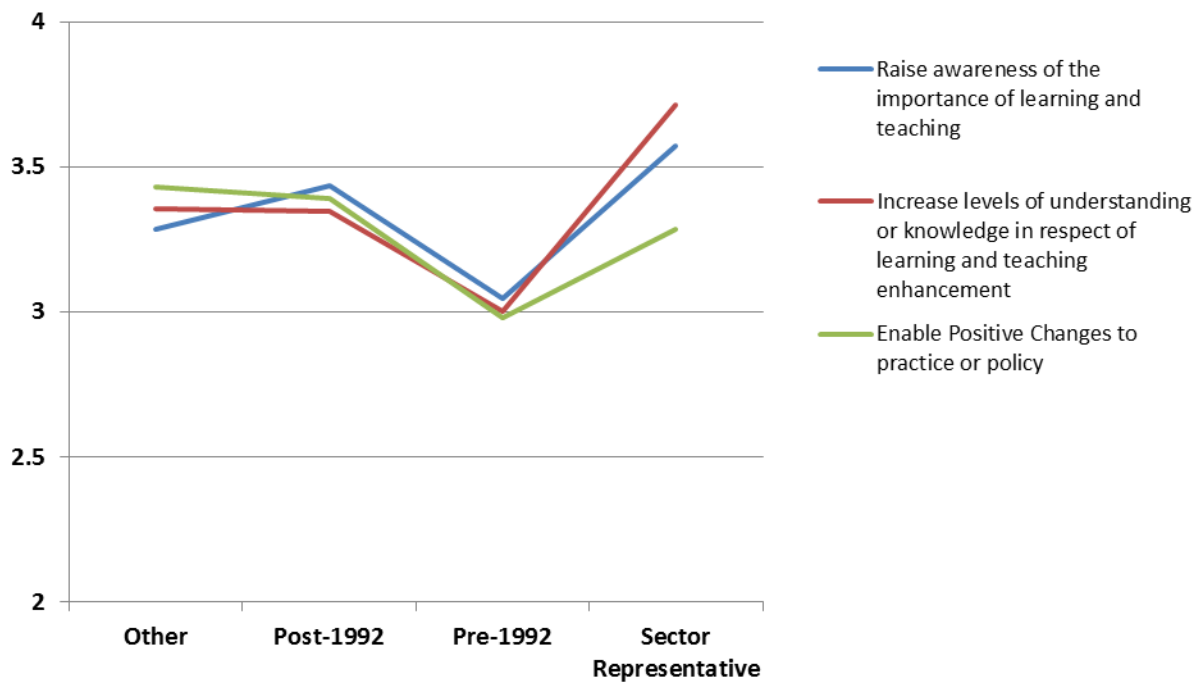
Response	Raise awareness on the importance of learning and teaching	Increase levels of understanding or knowledge in respect of L&T enhancement	Enable positive changes to practice or policy
Greatly	16%	19%	11%
Very much	24%	20%	30%
Moderately	36%	35%	35%
Slightly	9%	12%	10%
Not at all	14%	14%	13%

(n=97)

Further analysis of the nature of individuals' perceptions of the extent to which the HEA has helped institutions in each area is shown below, by organisation type, individual role, home nation and discipline.

Figure 25 below shows some variation of perceptions by type of organisation, with Pre-1992 institutions perceiving HEA to have helped them less in these areas than other types. Sector bodies tend to have a more positive view than institutions.

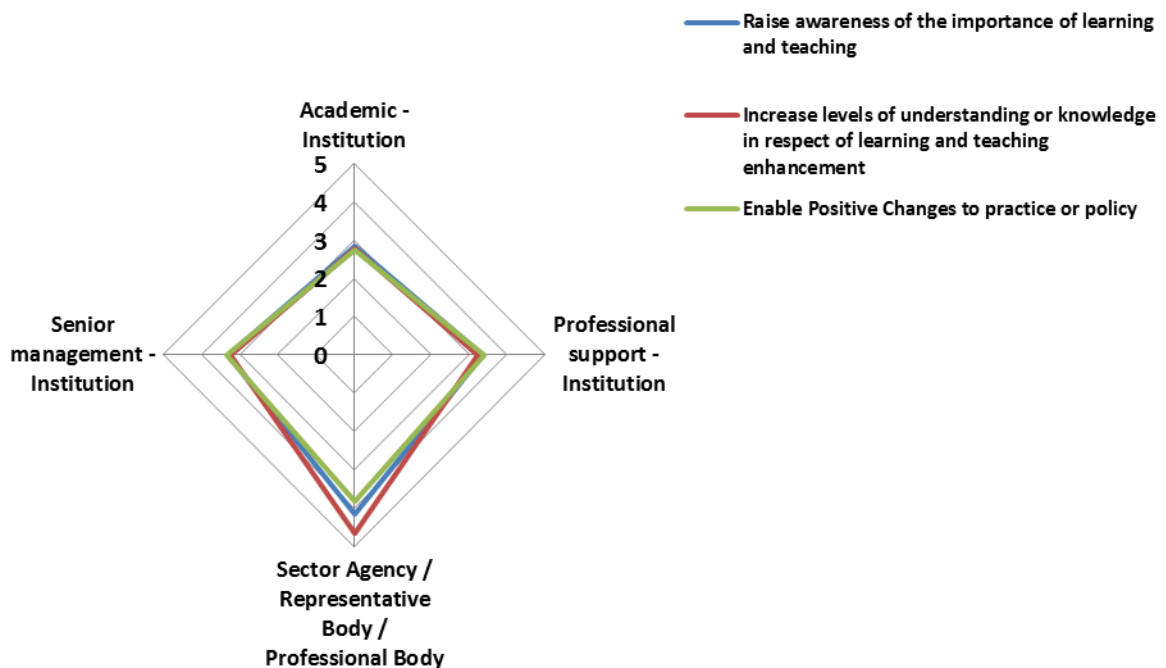
Figure 25 Contribution of HEA by organisation type



(1=low not at all and 5=greatly)

The radar chart in Figure 26 illustrates the relative views of perceptions of the extent to which the HEA has helped institutions in each area by different individual roles. Again academics have a somewhat lower rating than other roles.

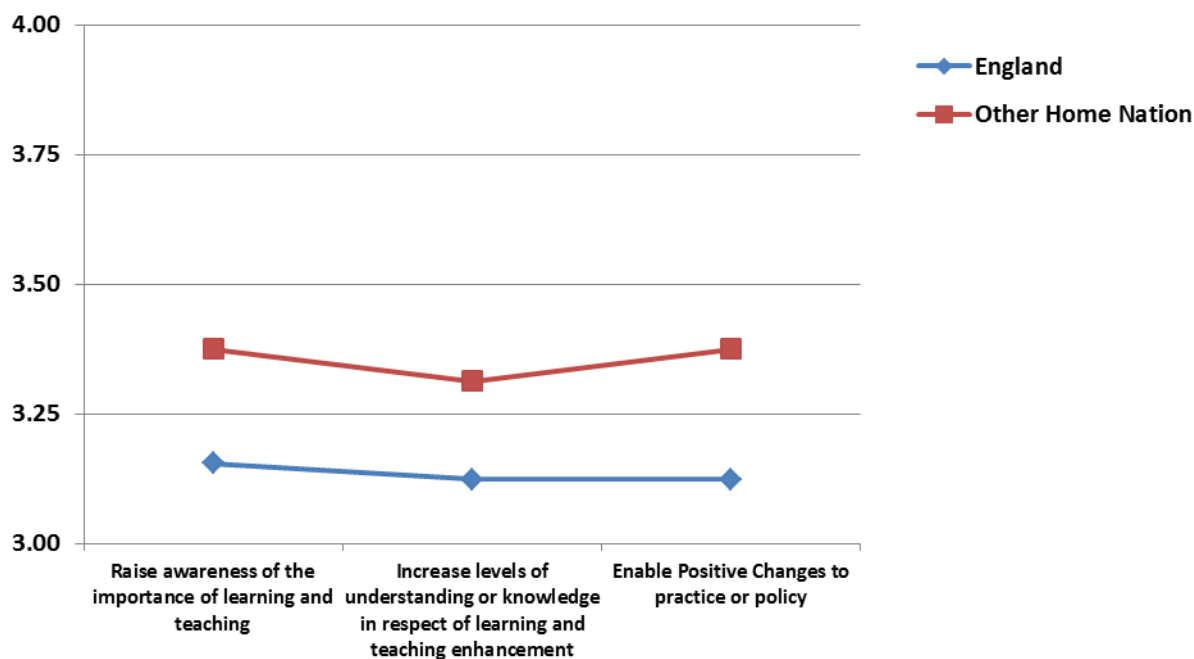
Figure 26 Contribution of HEA by individual role



(1=low not at all and 5=greatly)

The 'other home nations' rate the extent to which the HEA has helped in each area slightly higher than England, as shown in Figure 27.

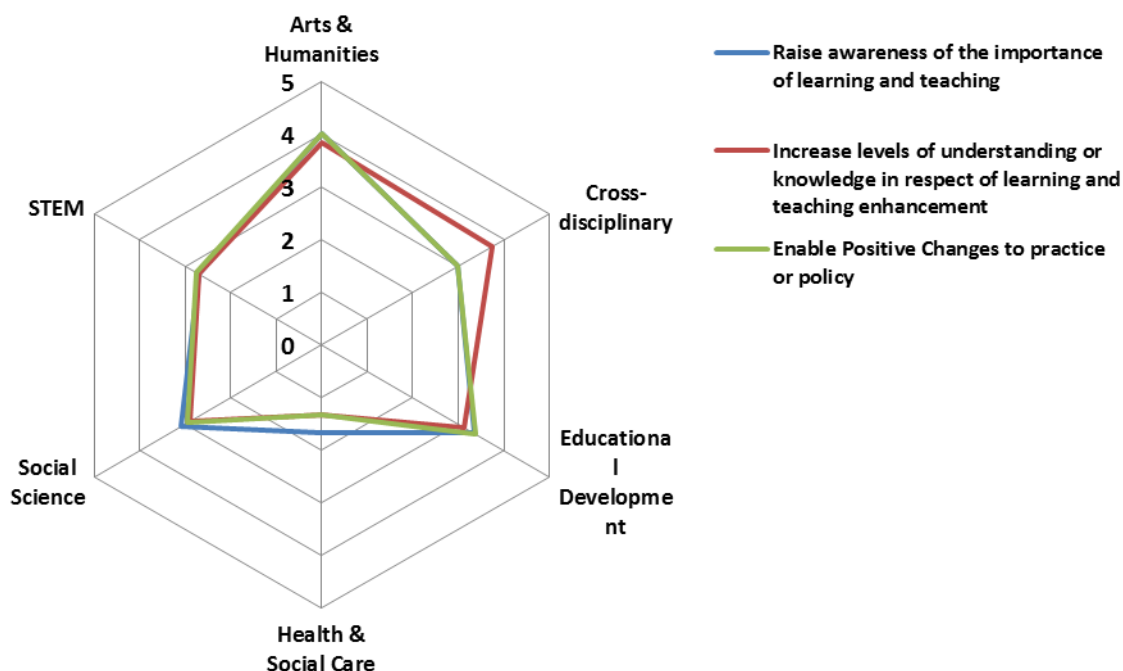
Figure 27 Contribution of HEA by home nation



(1=low not at all and 5=greatly)

There is some variation evident in terms of perceptions of the extent to which the HEA has helped across the disciplines. The most positive discipline is Arts & Humanities while STEM and Health & Social Care are less so. Cross-disciplinary respondents judge the HEA to have helped increase levels of understanding or knowledge in respect of learning and teaching enhancement to be higher than others. This is illustrated in Figure 28 below.

Figure 28 Contribution of HEA by discipline



(1=low not at all and 5=greatly)

Respondents were asked to provide reasons for their responses and 52 did so. Some of the key issues highlighted included the following areas:

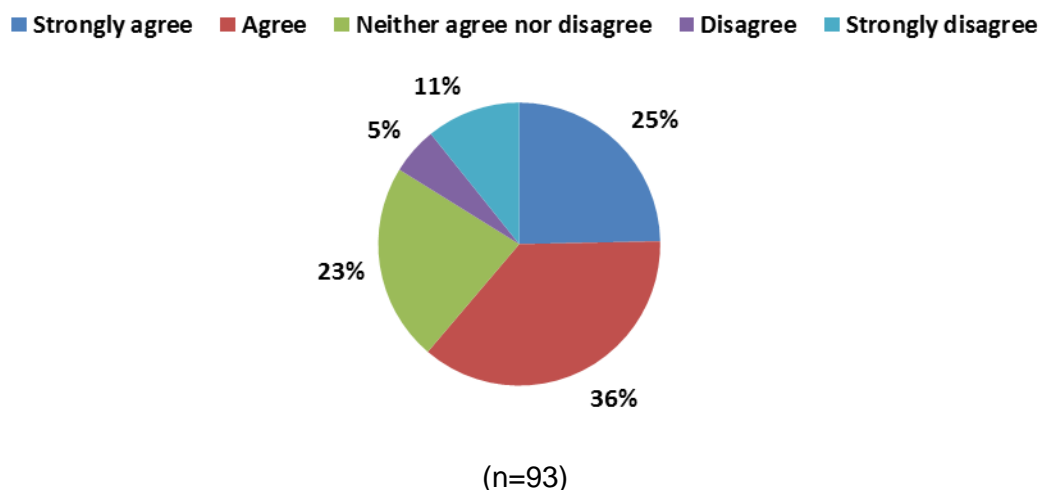
- **Contribution of the HEA**

- “HEA is clearly influencing national agendas, but it takes time for that to feed through. HEA will have had significant impact on a small number of staff and has provided good grant support, but the impact of that across the board is probably only moderate. Some subjects (e.g. Medicine) are driven more by regulatory requirements, so look for outputs from the HEA that are aligned with the requirements from bodies such as the General Medical Council.”
- “Our association with the HEA, with regard to accreditation, has been beneficial for us in gaining support from both senior management and at the grass roots for our new institutional wide accredited professional and academic development scheme.”
- “Myself and others in the institution recommend events and resources available on the HEA website, but there appears to be little done by the HEA to take these areas forward and widen their reach and gain wider recognition across the sector.”
- “I suggest that the HEA provides a great avenue for development and support for individuals who can't get that sort of thing at this institution. It is less good at achieving institutional change, but then that isn't within its power. It can only support and promote. It is a little unfair to ask such things of it.”
- “HEA is good on awareness raising and sharing of practice, but this is unmediated by HEA. Lots of people come together and make presentations to lots of other people and rarely does one hear the voice of critique?”

6 'Uniqueness' of HEA's services

The next question asked to what extent respondents agreed that the HEA's services are unique, i.e. that the same outcome could not have been achieved without HEA's support. Almost two-thirds (61%) of those who responded strongly agreed or agreed that the HEA's services are 'unique' – a good indication of its additionality. This is shown in Figure 29 below.

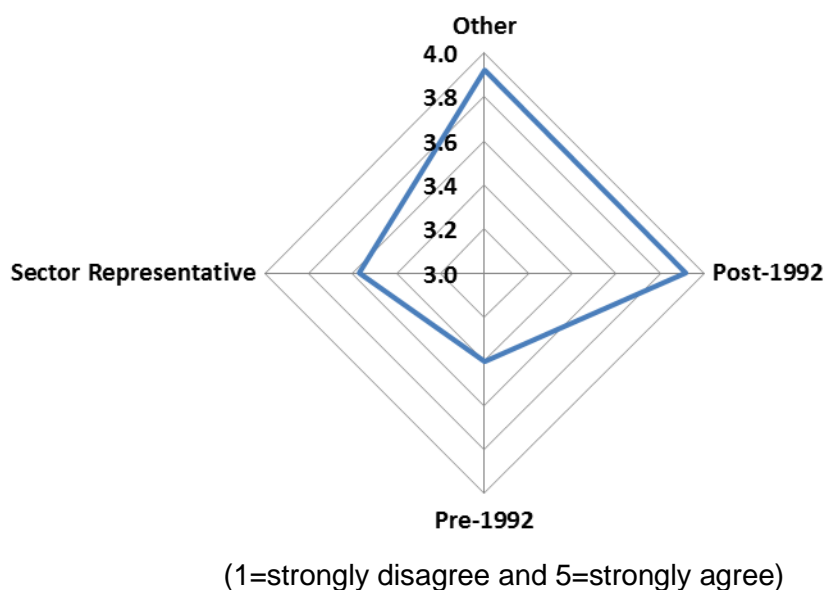
Figure 29 Uniqueness of HEA's services



Further analysis of the nature of individuals' perceptions of the uniqueness of the HEA's services is given below, by organisation type, individual role, home nation and discipline.

Figure 30 below shows some variation of perceptions by type of organisation. Post-1992 institutions and 'other' institutions have a slightly more positive view of the additionality of the HEA's services than Pre-1992s and sector organisations.

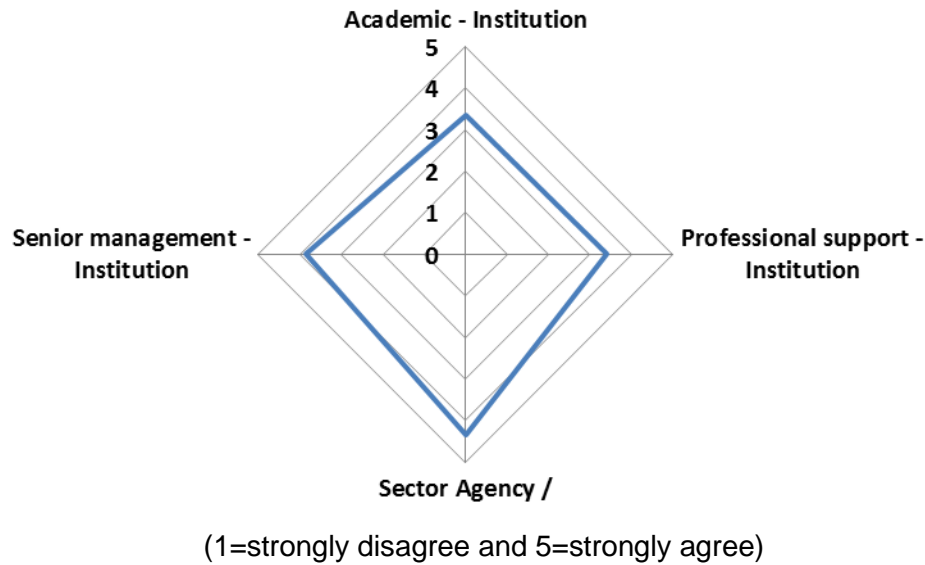
Figure 30 Uniqueness of HEA's services by organisation type



The radar chart in Figure 31 illustrates the relative views of perceptions of the uniqueness of the HEA's services by different individual roles. Again academics have a somewhat lower

rating than other roles, and senior institutional managers and those from sector organisations have a more positive view of the uniqueness of HEA's services.

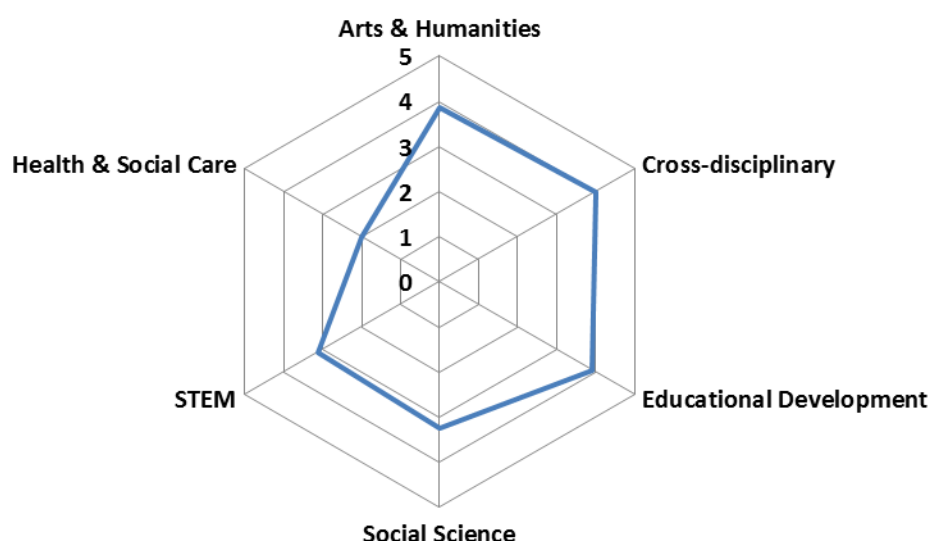
Figure 31 Uniqueness of HEA's services by individual role



The 'other home nations' rate the uniqueness of the HEA's services only very slightly higher than England.

There is some variation evident in terms of perceptions of the uniqueness of the HEA's services across the disciplines. Educational developers and cross-disciplinary respondents rated HEA's services as more unique than other discipline areas. This is shown in Figure 32.

Figure 32 Uniqueness of HEA's services by discipline



(1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree)

Respondents were asked to provide reasons for their responses and 75 did so, most pointing to the accreditation of teaching being the most unique aspect of the HEA's services. Some of the key points included the following areas:

▪ **Uniqueness of HEA's services**

- "Accreditation of teaching practice is unique, but other services could have been achieved without HEA's support."
- "Other bodies could accredit teaching in HEIs, although at the moment there is no obvious national alternative. There are other HE think-tanks, groups etc., which produce materials, provide good practice databases, support development, offer advice, run events etc., although they do have at least slightly different focuses. Is it important to be unique? HEA does offer across the board coverage and may be unique in doing so."
- "HEA is the only national body which advocates learning and teaching across HE and therefore the services it offers should be regarded as unique."
- "The centralisation of support for teaching is fantastic! Academics from countries without this sort of organisation can be quite jealous when they see what it can provide."
- "Although I agree in general there are areas of overlap with scholarly societies."
- "Yes the HEA's services are unique in regard to whether or not similar organisations exist elsewhere offering the same range of services but there are other organisations which between them could and do offer some of the services and so it's hard to say that 'only the HEA could achieve xyz'."

7 Future support and how well placed

The next two questions asked:

- For views on the type of support that the respondent's institution/organisation will need in developing learning and teaching strategy in the next five plus years, and why.

- How well they see the HEA positioned to respond to further sector needs in this respect.

7.1 Future support needs

A total of 82 responses were provided indicating future support needs in developing learning and teaching strategy in the next five plus years. These focussed on the following areas:

- The majority (28%) were in relation to supporting teaching and learning, for instance in the following comments:
 - “The key area will be in the area of T&Cs for academic staff. The nature of HE will change as diversification of the sector continues apace. There will no longer be one model and one way to achieve good learning, and staff will be on a range of contracts. The trick will be to manage these and still maintain the expectation of excellent practice.”
 - “I believe the institution needs guidance and support to appreciate fully that the student experience and the quality of teaching and learning offered at all levels of higher education should be a central focus of university policy. As such, the value of this should be elevated to that given to research. It is not clear that this yet happens, and it certainly does not reflect academic promotions policies.”
 - “Supporting excellent teaching in an era of declining resources – how you can provide cheaper teaching that doesn’t lose its quality. Supporting research training at the graduate/undergraduate levels.”
 - “Given the pressures in the sector there is a need for the HEA to continually refocus thinking back to the teaching and learning agenda.”
- Funding support was highlighted in 10% of responses:
 - “More funding for pedagogic research would be good – at present there is a lot of competition for fairly limited pots of funding.”
 - “There is the need for much more funding than is offered at the moment, if the HEA really wants to influence policy and practice. There is no other organisation in the UK that does the work that the HEA does.”
 - “We are very keen to develop our research in this area but despite multiple bids have not secured any funding. I would welcome a focussed element on new and smaller Institutions to facilitate development.”
- Support for technology enhanced learning was indicated by 9%:
 - “More of the same, plus more initiatives geared towards ‘future thinking’, imaginative and appropriate application of technology, tying learning & teaching strategy in more closely with the future needs of employers and society – locally, nationally, regionally and globally.”
 - “Responding to changed learning environments with VLEs, MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses), etc.”
 - “Support for developing academic staff in TEL (technology enhanced learning) given learners of the future; sharing of international practice.”
- Accreditation by 7%:
 - “The key area of development will be the accreditation of our HE training programme as part of our aspirations for taught degree awarding powers.”
 - “Where support would be valuable is in setting up CPD Framework (in alignment with the UKPSF) and continued support regarding accreditation, particularly in response to KIS (Key Information Sets)”

- “Scotland will continue to be different from England, so we will probably need less from the HEA in respect of enhancement, but we’ll continue to need the leverage of accreditation.”
- Policy development by 7%:
 - “Informing HEFCE and BIS (Department of Business, Innovation & Skills) policy development through the use of evidence. Providing an evidence base for HE development. We actually lack good evidence in the UK and rely on US/Australia for many things. Then shifting KPIs to take more account of what really matters. Helping us resist in appropriate ways the consumerisation of HE by stressing the importance of challenge and partnership.”
 - “Informed, advance knowledge about the sector, not just in the UK but more widely. Analysis of how a range of EU and UK government policy may impact on the sector. Continued investment in HE research (policy and practice) that encourages impact on student success.”
 - “Policy lead – What do we mean about Good Standing? What are we doing about it? Who are best in class and why? Recognising the nature of each institution and how they work together and apart.”
- Other support needs mentioned were: sharing good practice; facilitating networking (5%); staff development (5%); consultancy (4%); discipline level support (4%); engaging academics in CPD (4%); and resources (4%).

7.2 How well positioned

A total of 80 responses were provided on how well positioned the HEA is to respond to further sector needs in respect of developing learning and teaching strategy.

- Almost half (46%) were positive responses, for instance in the following comments:
 - “The HEA drives initiatives forward. It is often leading on the establishment of dialogue and debate through its projects, initiatives and research. It is very well placed to respond to future sector needs. Working this [over] as wide a range of institutions as possible would further enhance the HEA's ability to respond to sector needs.”
 - “Generally – well. The credibility appears to be high at present and the HEA is well respected. If the HEA can be seen to exert influence politically its impact and importance will grow significantly.”
- Just over one-third (36%) were more mixed, for example in the following comments:
 - “The set up is fine, but I feel that they don't have the same clout as the QAA who are much more feared (and therefore listened to!) by senior management.”
 - “I think it is developing in the right direction. I worry that by trying to sell their services, in addition to subscription fees, that institutions will stop using them as mediators etc. The model does not seem quite right in terms of what institutions are getting – a lot that is generated in HEIs is taken back to the HEA, and there is no real recognition for this partnership (particularly by making HEIs pay for the privilege).”
- While 10% were broadly negative, such as:
 - “I do not believe that the HEA can respond to sector needs as a whole – the research-intensive and the teaching-focused institutions require different support. At the moment the HEA is better able to support teaching-focused institutions.”

- “Not at all – too remote from ordinary academics. It may serve the "sector" (meaning VCs and management), but it certainly doesn't engage with ordinary teachers very well.”

The results of an analysis of the responses in terms of how positive or negative they were by organisation type, role and home nation is shown in the figures below.

As the first radar chart, in Figure 33, shows, the majority of Post-1992 institutions consider the HEA is well positioned to respond to further sector needs in respect of developing learning and teaching strategy. The views of other types of organisations are much more mixed, with the highest proportion of negative views coming from sector organisations.

In terms of role, academics within institutions have mixed views of how well positioned HEA is to respond to further needs, but have more negative views than other role types. Senior management and professional support staff in institutions have more positive views, while those from sector organisations are mixed. This is illustrated in Figure 34.

Respondents from the ‘Other home nations’ were far more positive in their views than those in England about how well positioned HEA is to provide further support. This is shown in Figure 35.

Figure 33 How well positioned by organisation type

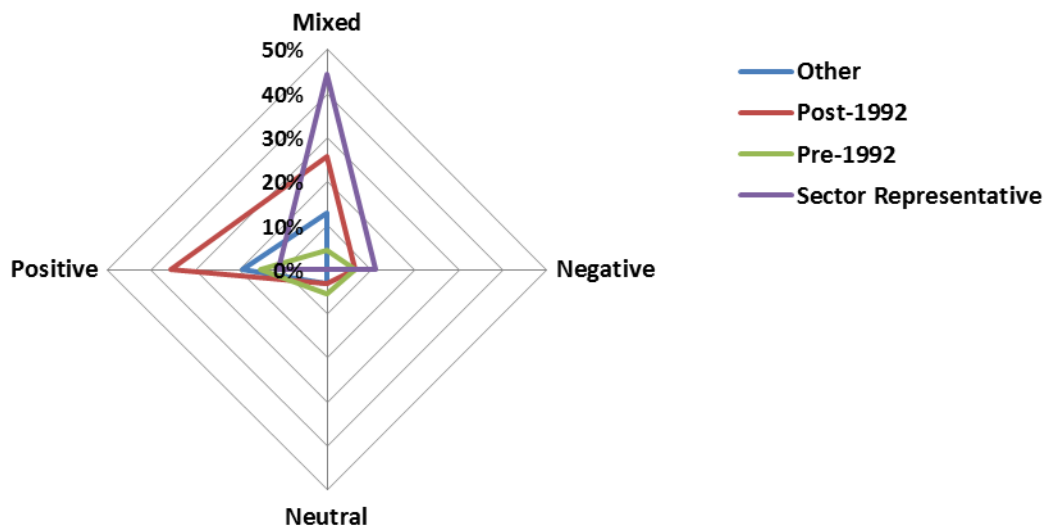


Figure 34 How well positioned by role

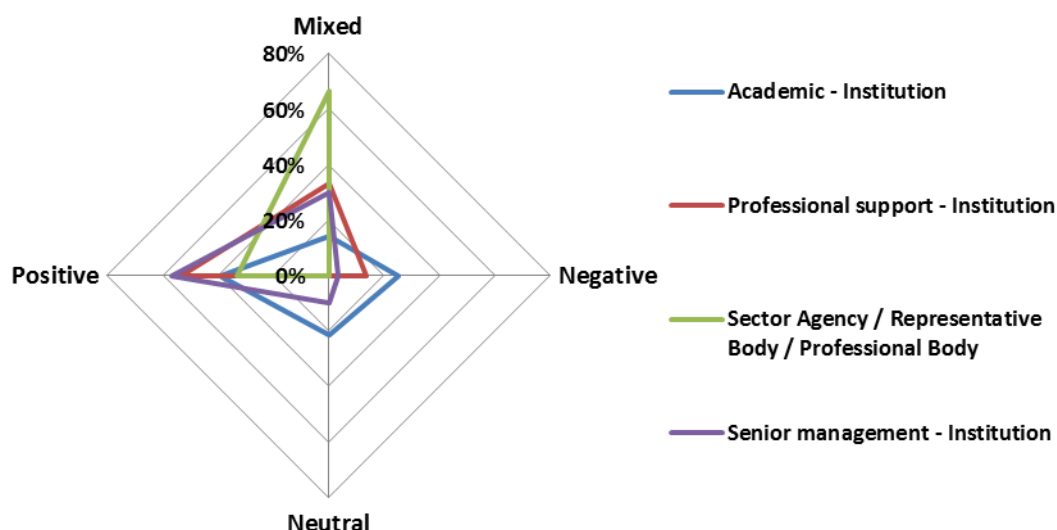
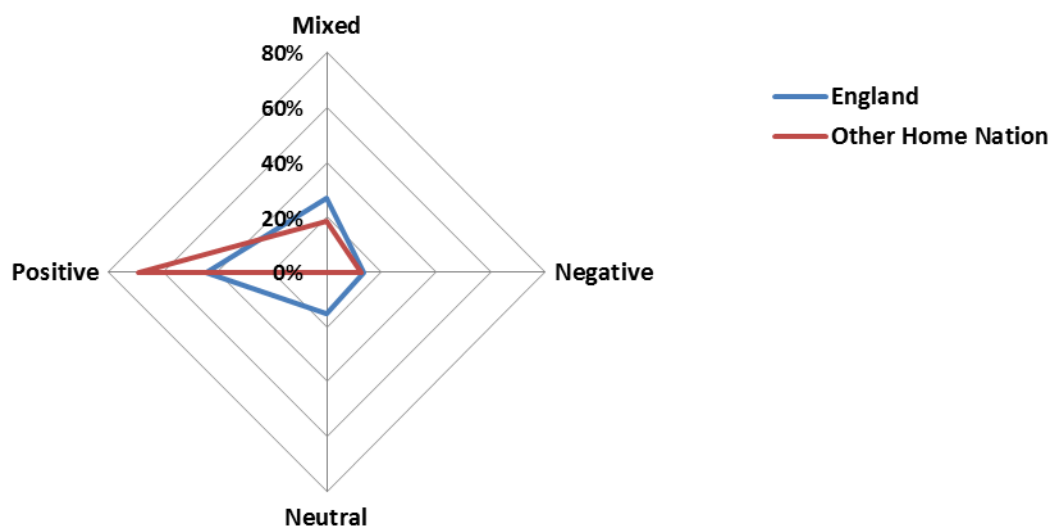


Figure 35 How well positioned by home nation



8 Discipline specific questions

The final section of the questionnaire asked respondents for views on their discipline.

8.1 Relevance and quality of support to discipline

The first two questions asked for respondents' assessment of the:

- Relevance of the HEA's support to their discipline in the period for review (2010/11 to the present).
- Quality of the HEA's support to their discipline in the period.

A total of 77 responses were provided to the first question, and 72 to the second. A breakdown is shown in the tables below. Almost half of respondents consider the HEA's support to their discipline is highly relevant and high quality. However, a sizable minority, 28% say that it is only slightly or not all relevant, and 29% that the support is either fair or poor.

This is in contrast to the results of the overall relevance and quality of HEA's services asked in the second part of the questionnaire (see section 4 above). These questions were asked specifically in relation to each of HEA's strategic priorities, but nonetheless responses overall were more favourable. In summary, the ratings were:

- Overall relevance of support to learning and teaching practice and strategy – 54% rated this excellent or good; 71% rated individual recognition, reward and accreditation excellent or good; and influencing policy was rated 47%.
- Overall quality of support to learning and teaching practice and strategy – 64% rated this excellent or good; 71% rated individual recognition, reward and accreditation excellent or good; and influencing policy was rated 51%.

Broadly therefore it would seem that perceptions of the relevance and quality of HEA's support to individual disciplines are lower than perceptions of the relevance and quality of support overall. This is particularly the case in terms of the quality of support to discipline, as shown in Figure 36.

Figure 36 Relevance & quality of HEA support to discipline

Response	Relevance of support
Completely relevant	17%
Very relevant	32%
Moderately relevant	22%
Slightly relevant	14%
Not at all relevant	14%

(n=77)

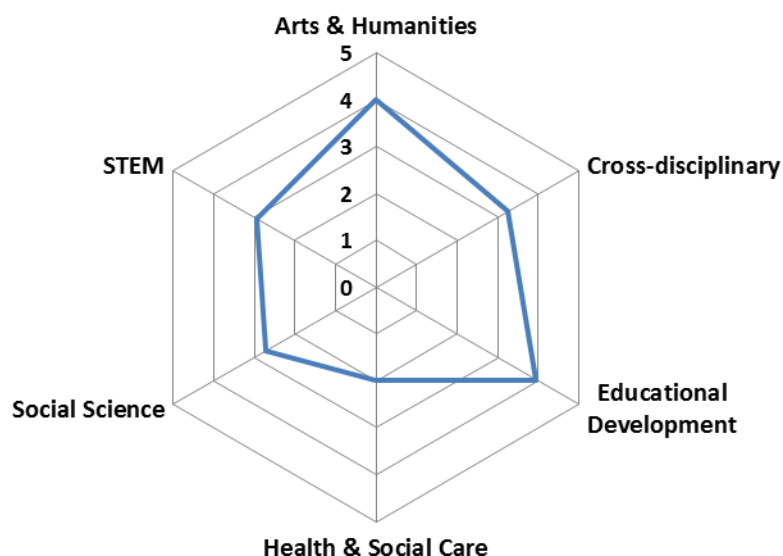
Response	Quality of support
Excellent	15%
Good	33%
Average	22%
Fair	12%
Poor	17%

(n=72)

A further breakdown of respondents' perceptions of the relevance and quality of HEA's support to individual disciplines is shown in Figures 37 and 38 below. The numbers are small in some cases (particularly Health & Social Care) so the results should be treated with caution, however this analysis indicates that:

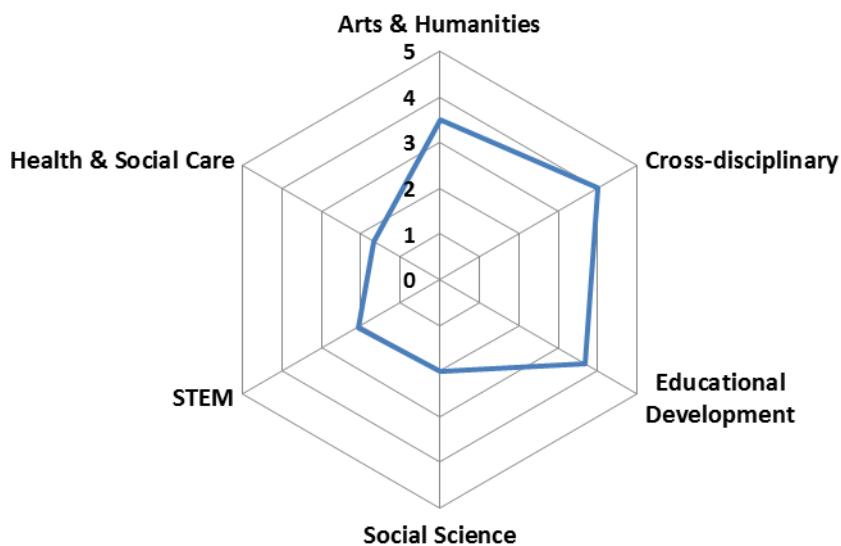
- Educational developers have the most positive view of the relevance of HEA's support, followed by Arts & Humanities, with Cross-disciplinary, Health & Social Care, Social Science and STEM having a far less positive view of its relevance.
- In terms of quality of support to disciplines, most rate this lower than they do relevance, with the exception of cross-disciplinary which rates quality higher.

Figure 37 Relevance of HEA support to disciplines



(1=not at all relevant; 5=completely relevant)

Figure 38 Quality of HEA support to disciplines



(1=poor; 5=excellent)

8.2 Added value of discipline-related support

Respondents were also asked in what ways has the HEA's discipline-related support added value for them as an individual, their organisation, and the sector as a whole. Figure 39 below summarises views and gives indicative examples of comments made. Observations on the value of discipline support were most positive as they related to the individual; more mixed (positive and negative) for their organisation and for the sector as a whole.

Figure 39 Analysis of comments relating to the ‘added value’ of discipline support from survey respondents

You as an individual	Your organisation	Sector as a whole
Broadly positive	Mixed, but less positive	Mixed, but broadly limited
<p>- "It has helped give credence to the work that I am doing institutionally, which in turn has led to my application for Principal Fellow through our HEA accredited institutional scheme."</p> <p>- "It has provided a consistent and high level of support for me as an individual. Cannot speak highly enough of it."</p> <p>- "Helps give a level of competence that is externally recognized."</p> <p>- "I have attended a couple of HEA events. These were OK but definitely felt like a bit of an academic "backwater"."</p> <p>- "It has given me some assurance that HEA is trying to collaborate with academics like myself by providing what it can do best, despite limiting and conflicting challenges."</p> <p>- "As a longstanding Fellow, I feel that there are significant shortcomings in the communications I receive from the Academy.</p>	<p>- "It has certainly supported some local developments which are of value, but the impact across the board is unlikely to be great."</p> <p>- "I have observed no effect."</p> <p>- "HEA can and has contributed to a better appreciation of the demanding and rather solid positioning of the existing parameters within the HE sector and where it is heading towards."</p> <p>- "Accreditation of our PG Cert and UKPSF."</p> <p>- "Significant, my staff know about the HEA, are trying to gain accreditation and want to engage."</p> <p>- "We used to have staff acting as liaison with each of the subject centres, but the same close working has not taken place since the establishment of the subject networks."</p>	<p>- "This has had clear impact across certain disciplines."</p> <p>- "Excellent at addressing broad based issues facing the sector (quantitative methods, undergraduate research, placements, etc)."</p> <p>- "Again, in my view, limited. This because, apart from adding some concern and attempting to drive the sector towards a more stable and influential platform for a better operation, commitment, and 'value added' to each and all those in the HE sector, the HEA might yet have a long hill to climb."</p> <p>- "I think the sector values the funding opportunities that the HEA offers since funding for research into tertiary education has almost disappeared. I think the outputs that the HEA has produced have definitely informed developments in the sector."</p> <p>- "The UKPSF and the HEA are important for the sector. It is a shame that the HEA doesn't take a</p>

You as an individual	Your organisation	Sector as a whole
<p>These are procedural in the extreme, and do not inspire me to seek deeper engagement.”</p> <p>-</p> <p>“Not discipline but related general pedagogic and policy areas of work, publications and conferences very helpful. More cross UK work has been insightful.”</p>		<p>more proactive and developmental role in working with sector groups and bodies. Perhaps this too will change.”</p> <p>-</p> <p>“Difficult to assess – no clear evidence of impact sector wide in terms of raising quality of teaching as a priority in HEIs – not evident enough in government thinking.”</p>

9 Additional comments

Finally, respondents were asked to provide any additional comments on the HEA and particularly what they would like to see coming out of the review. The following are examples of the comments made:

- “I would like the HEA to engage more and better with research intensive universities.”
- “A clear and realistic focus and purpose better communicated to the sector. A focus on providing the evidence and analysis to support policy development.”
- “I would welcome a focus on what i see as the key question: The diversification of the sector – excellent learning from diverse models.”
- “A key outcome would be a review of the HEA's support of the disciplines. HEA needs to answer whether it can do so efficiently when it has not been engaging with practitioners and other key stakeholders (e.g. learned societies, employers etc).”
- “My impression is of a very professional body; I hope a raised profile will be achieved.”
- “Lots of things are going on and it is problematic to keep abreast of all initiatives. In my role as institutional link it is not always clear on the broader vision or the details of individual initiatives. The communication is often from a number of sources and it is not always clear on whether this is addressed to me as an individual or in my role as HEA contact. Would like the HEA to continue its research funding activities. I would also like to see it continue the facilitation of networking opportunities.”
- “I think the restructuring that took place a few years ago was sensible but the HEA has struggled with an image problem since its inception and I feel that strong, stable, sustained leadership and clearly stated aims that recognise the needs of the sector (particularly in this new environment) are what is needed. There is also a reputation of 'the same old faces' being involved in the various initiatives of the HEA with things being done on a good will basis and therefore not necessarily being informed by the most appropriate individuals with the right skills. It would be good to see more openness and transparency around all the HEA's activities.”
- “I would like the HEA's funding either secured or expanded – if funding bodies don't recognise it through formal funding, especially funding which enables HEA to act more like a funding council, they can't expect the sector to pay attention to it. My experience

with HEA is that it is populated with highly motivated staff who care about teaching – changes to funding or at least the unsettled status of the organisation means there is far too much staff mobility (i.e. turnover of staff has been pretty high) for the individuals involved in projects to feel a sense of continuity with the HEA.”

- “We are very pleased with the support we get from them. An emphasis on value for money, and on sustainability of the organisation would be helpful – this may require a review of work carried out by the HEA and workload. We are content that they have managed the change in structure to date very successfully. It would be helpful to have further ideas as to how to promote the benefits of the HEA, and ensure that senior management in institutions recognise the value they get from it. It would also be helpful to look at proposals for generating income (e.g. via international engagement) and evaluating whether this has a negative impact on the UK-based work which they are remitted to carry out.”

APPENDIX 5: CASE STUDIES

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

As part of the overall approach to sector consultation, the review undertook research into six separate HEIs, the aim of which was to provide – in addition to other consultative routes taken – a more in-depth perspective on the levels and nature of engagement that the HEA has with individual institutions and teaching practitioners within these institutions.

1.2 Methodology

A long-list of potential case study institutions was selected by reference to:

- Information from the HEA's customer relationship management system including numbers of 'engagements' per institution
- Institutional size (by numbers of staff) based on Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) statistical data
- Nation
- Institution type (Pre-1992, Post-1992; 'small and specialist')

Institutions from the long-list were contacted and invited as prospective participants. Of those expressing an interest, a short-list of six were finally selected (five English institutions and one Scottish institution). The final six comprised a mixture of Pre- and Post-1992, small and specialist, and research-intensive institutions.

Visits to each institution were conducted and interviews held onsite with a range of the following (this varied for each institution) people:

- Senior staff with remit and oversight for the institution's learning and teaching enhancement strategy.
- Other key staff involved in HEA-supported or funded activity (such as change programmes).
- Staff involved in institutional projects and programmes to support the enhancement of learning and teaching and/or the student experience.
- Staff involved in the accreditation of HEA-endorsed programmes.
- Heads of school or programme leads (those who had engaged with HEA activity).
- National Teaching Fellows at the institution (if applicable).

Findings from interviews were also supplemented with information provided by institutions on their learning and teaching strategies and other relevant public data available on institutions. These have been used to inform the summary case studies which are set out in the sections below.

All case studies as presented have been approved by each institution and are presented as anonymised, for consistency. Permission was sought from all participating institutions on their preference for publication.

1.3 Key findings

1.3.1 Institutional strategies for learning and teaching

Institutional strategies in relation to learning and teaching varied in the detail of their aims and objectives, although a number of these shared common aspects; for example: staff capacity-building, recognition and reward; curriculum review; support to the wider student experience (including employability and the social aspects of teaching and learning) and enhancement of the use of technology across teaching and learning. These reflect many of the HEA's own areas of strategic thematic activity, as set out in the work of its Institutional Strategy and Change team.

1.3.2 Perceptions of progress made by the HEA over the period since 2010

Three of the six institutions offered observations on this, noting that there had been a significant improvement in the last two years in the clarity of presentation of the HEA's services to their institutions, and in accessibility of HEA support. Also commented upon favourably by one institution was the more general observed improvement in focus demonstrated by the HEA, compared to its position with the sector prior to its restructuring.

1.3.3 Nature of relationship with the HEA

This was discussed with institutions in terms of: the locus for relationship management at the institutional and discipline levels; perceptions of individual academic engagement with the HEA; how the institutional relationship is managed on both sides; and perceived influences on the strength of these relationships.

Characteristics of successful relationships developed at the senior institutional level appear to include:

- Strong history of senior institutional team (or individual) engagement with the HEA and current links with key personnel across the HEA – this can help with navigation to parts of HEA services of most potential interest to the institution.
- That senior managers within the institution can recognise where their own strategic priorities are reflected in those of the HEA, through services being provided (e.g. research; collaborative, discipline and individual grant schemes; change programmes, etc).
- A raised HEA profile amongst senior managers within an institution as a result of accreditation of CPD programmes against the UKPSF, engagement with high-profile national projects (for example: Student-Led Teaching Awards).
- Active engagement via the PVC Network.

The strength of the relationship also appears to be indicated by the range and type of roles as key named contacts within the HEA's institutional networks – and how far these individuals actively engage with the HEA's institutional liaison processes.

1.3.4 What works well?

Valued services provided by the HEA that were cited by institutions (and which had had a positive impact across the institutions and for individuals) included:

- For all six institutions, the HEA's support for professional accreditation and individual teaching career progression – including the value of the UKPSF and HEA's role in coordinating this on behalf of institutions.

- Access to, and facilitation of, key networks, including for example the PVC Network, National Teaching Fellows networks (mentioned by staff across four of the six institutions).
- Opportunities to collaborate with colleagues from across the sector on shared areas of interest (and on collaborative projects).
- Two institutions where staff had participated in change programmes were positive on HEA's professional contribution to these projects, and in the wider impact these had had on institutional practice.
- In particular for the two smaller institutions visited, small grants for individual teaching staff at different stages of their careers were welcomed by those in receipt of grant funding and also seen as an important part of wider contribution to the professional development of staff.
- Longer-term projects – as a source of expertise to inform sector debate.

1.3.5 Engagement with and contribution to discipline areas

Four of the six institutions made observations on the variability of engagement with the HEA across the discipline areas within their own institutions (as represented through academic faculties and schools).

A common observation was that individuals rather than academic departments tend to be most consistent in engaging with the HEA's subject networks, and that the perceived value of the HEA and its services is felt more strongly at the individual level. This is despite the fact that HEA offers a variety of services at the academic departmental level (for example its Teaching Development Grants – both departmental and collaborative schemes).

Some of this is a matter of visibility of activity across the institution as a whole, and we note that the HEA's Annual Institutional reports do not always allow for capture of all aspects of engagement between disciplines within an institution and the HEA's subject cluster teams.

In certain institutions (for example within one of the research intensives), consultees perceived links with the HEA at the discipline level to have been stronger historically with certain subject networks. This was attributed in part to strong relationships formed and remaining with the former subject centres in these areas (STEM), and partly to stronger cultural emphasis on professional development, for vocational subject areas in particular (Health).

For other institutions, the strength of links between academics working within disciplines and the HEA is sustained through involvement in national programmes (for example on Assessment).

In some institutions, the views of senior staff differ from those of academics with links to the HEA. In one Pre-1992 institution for example, senior managers viewed there to have been a gap in support to certain disciplines with the demise of the subject centres; staff working within faculties with established links with the HEA were more positive on the resources and events that they had accessed.

For one institution, it was observed that many academics had engaged with the HEA at the level of the cross-cutting enhancement themes, rather than through subject networks.

A number of staff consulted (of all levels of seniority) viewed the HEA as being too focussed around an established 'HEA community' that does not necessarily represent views of staff working more widely across academic disciplines. This can in some institutions militate

against a wider 'reach', although we have seen evidence that poor perceptions of the HEA amongst certain groups of staff do not preclude positive engagement with others.

1.3.6 Room for improvement

What could the HEA be doing to strengthen its position and improve its services to institutions?

Staff across institutions visited highlighted the following:

- Being more proactive in disseminating findings from its sector-wide projects and in following up with individual institutions on outcomes (although several consultees also praised where this was working well – e.g. the ASPIRE conference).
- Development of key communities of practice across the sector, not necessarily represented through current HEA networks but of interest to institutional contacts (leads on 'student experience' directorates for example). This would help to strengthen links between institutions and the HEA.
- Greater structure and focus for the institutional liaison scheme, to allow HEA to build effective relationships across the institution and therefore enable a more tailored service.
- Use of Annual Institutional Reports as a means of reporting on outcomes of engagement.
- More profile-raising on the scope of the activities of subject networks and how these work with institutions, individuals and departments.

1.3.7 Differences of view across institutions

Is there credence to the – often expressed – perception that the HEA has a stronger sector presence with certain groups of institutions, compared to others?

We have seen some evidence of perceived concerns that the HEA has yet to demonstrate its reach into aspects of research-led teaching.

Yet there is also evidence suggesting that the HEA is doing valuable work at the institutional and individual levels with Pre- and Post-1992, and small & specialist institutions.

Views on the HEA's strengths are fairly consistent across all types of institution; perceptions of its weaknesses are more varied depending upon the position and role of consultees. Evidence suggests, however, that the areas for improvement identified for the HEA would, if addressed, have a universally positive effect on its relationships across institutions as a whole.

2 CASE STUDY 1

2.1 Profile

Post-1992 institution.

2.2 Institutional strategy on learning and teaching

The university's Learning and Teaching strategy (2013 – 2017) outlines five key priorities:

- Build the capacity of its staff
- Increase provision which supports students' enterprise, employability and leadership
- Develop and deliver curricula which support our outrageous ambition
- Increase engagement of the whole community
- Improve the university's key systems and processes

Through these areas, the institution intends to:

- Raise further the status and perceived value of teaching amongst its staff
- Improve visibility of national standards (as defined through the UKPSF)
- Increase opportunities for peer learning and networking, sharing of good practice and resources within the institution

Responsibility for implementation of the strategy sits with the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Learning & Teaching, co-ordinated through the Learning & Teaching Directorate (headed by the Director of Learning & Teaching). The directorate comprises three main elements:

- Careers and Employability
- Learning and Development Unit (including academic skills development for students)
- Open 4 Learning (technology-enhanced learning)

2.3 Overview of engagement with HEA

Primary institutional engagement with the HEA is managed through the PVC (Learning & Teaching).

A total of 33% of the university's staff are recognised as Fellows of the HEA and three staff are National Teaching Fellows¹. One of the university's programmes has been accredited by the HEA against the UKPSF.

The HEA has also engaged university staff through receipt of grant funding (linked back to the institution's strategic aims around learning & teaching); through participation in the P-RES and P-TES surveys, through university participation and also contribution to HEA-sponsored and led events, reviews and publications.

2.4 Relationship with the HEA

2.4.1 At the institutional level

There is a well-established relationship at the institutional level, underpinned by the long-standing involvement of the university's current Pro Vice-Chancellor for Learning and Teaching with the HEA and its predecessor bodies.

¹ Based on HEA Annual Institutional Report for the university for 2012/13

It was observed by some interviewees that this has brought greater clarity to the relationship and the university is able to identify what it is seeking from HEA's support and where it directs activity, such as application for small grant funding, in conjunction with its institutional strategy for learning and teaching. The 'two-way' responsibility of the relationship is seen as critical.

Dialogue between the HEA and the institution at this level is focussed primarily around the PVC and the Director for Learning and Teaching. The Vice-Chancellor also chairs the Teaching Quality and the Student Experience Committee for HEFCE and therefore engages directly and indirectly with the HEA through this route.

2.4.2 At faculty/subject level

Whilst some individuals have established strong links into the HEA, through project work and established relationships, this is reportedly by no means consistent across the institution's faculties and schools.

Work at the individual discipline and subject cluster level is perceived to be less visible to the institution through its Annual Institutional Report from the HEA, but this is partly acknowledged to be reflective of the institution and the wider sector.

2.5 Views on HEA's services and their contribution

The HEA's support for professional accreditation and to individual career progression was cited by a number of consultees as core to its contribution to the sector and central to its value to the institution, and to individuals. The establishment of a University Centre for Learning and Teaching and development of a continuing professional development framework is a central tenet of the institution's own strategy for learning & teaching, and a recent appointment to Director of Learning and Teaching will be responsible for developing and aligning the institution's own CPD framework to the UKPSF.

Consultees from discipline areas (Design, Media and Management) cited as of particular benefit the opportunities to work collaboratively with colleagues across the sector (for example, joint project working with other art-based institutions, and sharing findings through national networks).

Those involved with national initiatives (such as the Employability workstream and the Changing the Learning Landscape programme) valued the advice and guidance provided by the HEA, although some concerns were raised that resources at the HEA appeared to be 'stretched' in some areas, and that it was not always clear to see where thematic work filters through to disciplines.

Other areas which were cited as being of particular value were:

- Individual networks, not just those already established (like the PVC Network) but the opportunity to meet informally with key HEA personnel at sector events, including but not only those hosted by the HEA.
- Small seed grants for teaching staff – providing development funding to staff (“buying space and thinking time”) at different stages of their careers.
- Longer-term project work – e.g. 3 year + research projects as a source of expertise to inform sector debate, although the influence of senior individuals on institutional culture was felt to be paramount in changes to practice over time.
- Opportunities to raise the profile of certain disciplines in respect of learning and teaching.

Areas where consultees felt there to be scope for improvement included:

- Being more proactive in disseminating findings from some of the funded project activity across the sector and following up on outcomes with institutions (for example for the 'Transforming Assessment Pilot Scheme').
- 'Searchability' of existing resources – these can be hard to find (Arts and Design resources were noted in this respect).
- Seeking more opportunities to raise the HEA's credibility across different 'audiences' within the sector by demonstrating in-depth understanding of the pressures and preoccupations of different types of institutions, and how their service can contribute to institutions seeking to manage these in a competitive environment.

3 CASE STUDY 2

3.1 Profile

Pre-1992 institution.

3.2 Institutional strategy on learning and teaching

The university has recently reviewed and updated its strategic direction in respect of research and education, which has allowed the institution to review its approach to learning and teaching within a broader context.

Particular areas of priority include:

- Curriculum review and parity of the student experience across disciplines
- Students as partners
- Promotion criteria for staff (incorporating both teaching and research excellence)

The university's Pro Vice-Chancellor leads on the development and implementation of the strategy.

3.3 Overview of engagement with HEA

Institutional contact with the HEA is managed primarily via the university's Head of Learning & Development (who leads a team in place since 2010 responsible amongst other areas for: academic and wider staff development; facilitating and co-ordinating awards and grant funding opportunities; driving project work contributing to the university's education strategy).

At the time of review the university had a total of 138 staff recognised as HEA Fellows, representing just under 13% of its total teaching staff² and currently has six courses accredited by the HEA (four of which have been accredited during 2012/13).

The university's CPD framework has been mapped to the UKPSF and has recently been accredited by the HEA. This is expected to contribute to a substantial increase in numbers of staff recognised as Fellows from the current year.

Other key engagement with the HEA in the last two years, cited by consultees at the university, has included: change programme involvement (including the Assessment and Feedback Change Programme and the Changing the Learning Landscape programme – a project on effective use of digital technologies); provision of advisory support by the HEA to a university initiative on employability action planning and, at the discipline level, a collaborative project with the Faculty of Humanities and the HEA's Arts and Humanities subject network.

3.4 Relationship with the HEA

3.4.1 At the institutional level

Consultees observed that the institutional profile of the HEA has strengthened recently, in part due to the CPD accreditation and the university's refocusing of its strategy around learning and teaching, although not all senior managers are yet fully aware of the HEA's services and activities with the university.

² Based on HEA Annual Institutional Report for the university for 2012/13

Also cited positively were the increased frequency of interaction between the university and the HEA's Partnership Team, and the communications provided to the university, including regular 'horizon-scanning' email bulletins on forthcoming HEA activity (identified as particularly helpful with the demise of the subject centres). University consultees viewed there to have been an improvement in the last two years in accessibility of HEA support and in clarity of general presentation of the HEA's service offerings.

Weaker aspects to the relationship identified included: the use of the annual institutional report as a communications tool (viewed as a 'snapshot in time' which did not always reflect all key aspects of current engagement) and support for applications (teaching grants and NTFS submissions), including follow up on unsuccessful submissions.

3.4.2 At faculty/subject level

Links with the HEA at the discipline level have traditionally been stronger with the STEM and Health subject networks, and less so with the social sciences. This was attributed partly to the strong relationships previously forged with former subject centres in these areas, and partly to a stronger cultural emphasis on professional development, for vocational subject areas in particular.

One consultee noted that engagement with the HEA tends to be variable across all disciplines, and consistency of engagement typically lies with individuals rather than with disciplines as a whole.

3.5 Views on HEA's services and their contribution

Areas of strength identified across university consultees included the following:

- Senior managers, learning and development staff and staff working within disciplines all identified the HEA's support on professionalisation of teaching (including CPD framework development) to be of real benefit to the university and "instrumental" in contributing towards the shaping of the institution's strategy in this regard.
- Staff who had participated in change programmes were positive on the HEA's professional contribution to these projects.
- The HEA's ability in being able to broker links with key contacts within other institutions and with projects underway across the sector was also cited as of value, where this is actively managed.

Areas where the HEA was felt to be weaker or where there was scope for improvement included:

- Credibility in some of its research outputs (where the practical application of findings were unclear or where examples of potential solutions arising from research were not forthcoming).
- Better self promotion of services to the sector (the HEA was viewed by some to be still too reliant on 'word of mouth').
- Reach across the wider academic community – the HEA was perceived by a number of consultees to be focussed around an established 'HEA community'. Greater engagement via influential senior academic staff (including those working towards Senior and Principal Fellowship status) could help to mitigate this.
- More ongoing support for individuals who have achieved Fellowship.

- Greater consistency of messages on the charging arrangements for key services (some consultees identified that they had received 'mixed messages' from different parts of the HEA in the past on this).
- Better clarity around some of the HEA's partnerships with professional sector associations and how it plans to work with these organisations (for example: the Network of Employability Developers and the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services).

4 CASE STUDY 3

4.1 Profile

Pre-1992 institution.

4.2 Institutional strategy on learning and teaching

Three areas of the university's strategic plan that relate to its priorities in this area are:

- Enhance the quality of the student experience
- Attract and enhance the quality of people (students and staff)
- Promote the educational and social impacts of teaching and learning

Some of the specific initiatives underway which contribute to the university's work in these areas include:

- New Academics programme (covering expectations of staff with respect to teaching and research)
- Student peer support via peer mentoring and Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) (linked to strategic priorities around retention)
- Learning through research projects (building student capabilities around research skills and enhancing employability)
- Curriculum development
- International student support and well-being

4.3 Overview of engagement with HEA

The university's key contact with the HEA is the Director of Teaching and Learning Support (who is based within the Directorate of the Student Experience and who provides support to the Vice-President and two Associate Vice-Presidents for Teaching, Learning and Students).

Senior staff have also contributed to HEA-related initiatives, notably the Higher Education Academic Report Implementation Steering Group and the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) Advisory Group.

Four of the university's programmes are accredited by the HEA (2 postgraduate certificates in Medical Education; 1 New Academics Programme; 1 Development Framework for teaching assistants, demonstrators and researchers), and 356 staff are recognised as HEA Fellows, representing just over 8% of its total teaching staff³.

4.4 Relationship with the HEA

4.4.1 At the institutional level

Senior staff at the university acknowledged that over the last few years, at the institutional level, engagement with the HEA had been "minimal" and this was attributed in part to concerns that the HEA had not adequately acknowledged how research-led institutions such as this one are already investing in teaching and learning, nor had it been able to persuade the university that it could add value to work already underway.

³ Based on HEA Annual Institutional Report for the university for 2012/13

Where the engagement between the university and the HEA has been more productive, this has been through the strength of relationships with individual personnel.

Evidence of the HEA's wider engagement with the university was felt to be insufficiently clear through the annual report, and concerns were raised that the HEA has not made it easy for senior staff to promote the HEA to colleagues (greater clarity on the HEA's overall 'value proposition' would be welcomed). Consultees were more positive on indications of a "different language" being used by the HEA through more recent presentations to the sector by the new chief executive (at a recent Russell Group event, for example).

4.4.2 At faculty/subject level

Interviews were held with staff from the Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences and the Faculty of Medical and Human Sciences who engaged as Fellows and associates, through accreditation of programmes and selectively through the HEA's programme of conferences and events. Communications from the HEA varied between staff: some were typically 'inundated', others received limited information. Consultees observed that their overall impression of the HEA within the last couple of years was that its outputs had become more visible with greater choice available.

4.5 Views on HEA's services and their contribution

Perceptions on the support to discipline areas were variable across consultees. Senior staff viewed there to have been a gap in support to certain disciplines with the demise of the subject centres; staff working within faculties with established links with the HEA were more positive on the resources and events that they had accessed.

Staff involved in accreditation of programmes expressed confidence in the current process as rolled out by the HEA, which was seen to be 'lighter touch'.

Views on the relevance of the HEA's programme of events were also mixed. Some consultees in faculties cited events such as the ASPIRE conference (hosted by Exeter University) as good examples of how the HEA can facilitate sharing of approaches taken by peer institutions. Other staff expressed concerns that certain areas of strategic interest to the university were not clearly reflected in activities and services on offer (work around MOOCs was cited as an example).

Areas for further development or improvement by the HEA as identified by university staff included:

- Longer lead-in time for requests to associates to be involved in HEA activities – staff felt that these requests are often sent at too short-notice (to review applications for Teaching Excellence awards for example).
- Review of the HEA's position on charging for accreditation of non-institutional staff working in clinical disciplines.
- Development of key communities of practice across the sector, not necessarily represented through current HEA networks but of interest to institutional contacts (leads on 'student experience' directorates for example). This would help to strengthen links between institutions and the HEA.
- Greater structure and focus for the institutional liaison scheme and programme of visits, based on an in-depth understanding of the university, progress being made, and

sharing of sector intelligence and activities across other institutions which could be of particular interest.

5 CASE STUDY 4

5.1 Profile

Post-1992 institution.

5.2 Institutional strategy on learning and teaching

The university's Learning and Teaching Strategy is supported by an annual implementation plan and is overseen by a Learning, Teaching and Enhancement Committee. The strategy is influenced by the broader strategic aims of the university, by external sectoral influences as well as the increasing institutional emphasis on quality enhancement and a more reflective approach to evaluation.

At the start of 2011/12, the university began a two year change programme to refocus its undergraduate and postgraduate curricula. This included the introduction of a new method for course approval, embedding graduate attributes in every course, providing work-related learning opportunities for all undergraduates, increasing the focus on formative assessment and moving from a 15 to a 20 credit modular structure.

5.3 Overview of engagement with HEA

During 2012/13, the university's engagement with the HEA involved the following⁴:

- Almost 22% of academic staff are Fellows of the HEA, 55 of whom were recognised during 2012/13, and 10 members of staff have been awarded NTFs.
- Two CPD courses were accredited during 2012/13.
- HEA provided funding for research by individual staff.
- One student joined the HEA student advisory forum.
- In addition, two academics received sponsorship for training, eleven members of staff contributed as HEA reviewers, a range of staff attended HEA events, and HEA provided one day of consultancy support to the university.

5.4 Relationship with the HEA

5.4.1 At the institutional level:

The HEA's subscription fee is considered quite high. HEA's management of the relationship with the university has improved over the period of the review. Prior to this, the key contact had changed each year for a three to four year period, and the current stability is welcome.

5.4.2 At faculty/subject level

The institutional relationship with HEA has improved, but the loss of the subject centres has negatively affected the relationship at discipline level. A key element of the structure of the relationship has been lost as a consequence, and communication is poorer as a result. Furthermore, subject networks are perceived to be driven by individual practitioners and there seems to be substantial variation across the disciplines.

⁴ Based on HEA Annual Institutional Report for the university for 2012/13

5.5 Views on HEA's services and their contribution

University staff acknowledged the value of the UKPSF and HEA's role in coordinating this on behalf of institutions, although they considered that another sector organisation could fulfil this role if required.

Views of a change programme on digital literacy run by HEA in the past few years were very favourable across the university. It provided a catalyst for change and the outcomes were that it helped embed digital literacy across the faculties. There is now an established community of practice across the institution and Digital Literacy has become one of the graduate attributes. HEA's involvement brings credibility as it is an established professional body.

Other services, such as HEA's surveys, networking events and pilot projects are also considered valuable as they present a consistent national view and opportunities to share learning and good practice. In addition, some of the HEA's publications are excellent; in particular Professor Gibbs' 'Dimensions of Quality', along with reports synthesising research reports such as 'What Works'.

Areas for further development or improvement by the HEA as identified by university staff included:

- Once academics are accredited to the UKPSF more could be done to monitor continued good standing. Institutions should be responsible for determining whether academic colleagues remain in good standing. There is ambiguity about this at present including what should happen if academics cease to be in 'good standing'.
- The utility of the NTF scheme is considered to be limited in some respects and its mission unclear. The HEA could consider what else could be done beyond the networking opportunities provided for individual recipients of the award, to optimise the dissemination of good practice in teaching and learning.
- Annual reports could be more accurate, personalised and focus on the outcomes of engagement with HEA, not only the inputs and outputs. It would also be helpful for the HEA to get to know institutions better, by reading institutional learning and teaching strategies, understanding overall institutional strategies and strategic aims, and proactively offering tailored assistance in response. This would be far more effective engagement.
- HEA could be doing more in terms of their policy role, specifically political lobbying. An example would be taking the lead for the sector in the debate regarding contact hours with students and teaching quality. It is not clear at present how HEA seeks to collate the 'voice of the sector' and then whether or how it represents this to government.
- HEA provides grant funding to individual academics to undertake research, but the benefits are not always felt at an institutional level. Support to be able to disseminate learning internally could be usefully provided.
- The HEA's online activity could be more effective by focussing more on its web and social presence. It could for instance use its online presence to take a leading role in political debates concerning the learning and teaching agenda. Also more and better online dissemination of materials could cut the perceived high costs of printed materials. More frequent, contextualised research briefings by top researchers would be helpful to provide a 'springboard' into a topic.

5.6 Other observations

A few years ago the HEA seemed to have 'lost its way' somewhat, but there has been a significant improvement and it seems more confident as an organisation. However, university staff observed some ambiguity in the HEA's relationship with HEIs, arising from the potential tension inherent in its dual role as an accrediting and a development organisation. In addition, the HEA needs to do more to demonstrate the value for money provided for institutional subscriptions. Once an institution has most of their staff accredited against the UKPSF, making the case for subscribing could become increasingly difficult.

HEA should find more inspirational, innovative ways of engaging with the sector, with less focus and discussion on its internal planning, structure and bureaucracy.

6 CASE STUDY 5

6.1 Profile

Pre-1992 institution.

6.2 Institutional strategy on learning and teaching

The university's learning and teaching strategy forms part of the overall institutional strategy 2012-15, and is focussed on the university becoming a leading international technological university. Learning and teaching aims include: to improve opportunities for students' external engagement with industry and the public sector; to introduce more interdisciplinarity and flexibility in the curriculum; to increase international opportunities for students; and to embed graduate attributes to equip students with the skills and business links to ensure their employability.

More broadly, the learning and teaching strategy has been influenced by the Scottish Government's policy and legislative change. In particular this includes moves to make access routes into HE more flexible, and the introduction of outcome agreements, setting out what universities plan to deliver in return for their funding.

6.3 Overview of engagement with HEA

During 2012/13, the university's engagement⁵ with the HEA involved the following⁵:

- Just under 23% of academic staff are Fellows of the Academy, with 12 becoming accredited during 2012/13. Just one member of staff is a Senior Fellow and there are no Principal Fellows.
- Two courses have been accredited by the HEA since 2011 – the Postgraduate Certificate in Advanced Academic Studies (Academic Practice) and the 3-day Induction course, Teaching, Learning and Assessment in HE.
- In addition, the institution took part in the P-TES and P-RES surveys and the Student Led Teaching Awards.
- Two academics contributed to HEA events, six members of staff contributed as HEA reviewers, a range of staff attended HEA events, and HEA provided a small amount of funding for research.

6.4 Relationship with the HEA

6.4.1 At the institutional level

At senior levels, the perception is that HEA has a relatively limited presence in Scotland. Outside of the core team who engage with HEA at the university, there is limited awareness of the organisation. Visits by HEA to the university are infrequent and contact tends instead to be made in the course of participation in Scotland-wide events and committees on which HEA is represented, such as the Scottish Higher Education Enhancement Committee (SHEEC), the Learning and Teaching Committee of Universities Scotland, Scottish Higher Education Developers Group, among others.

Over the past year the HEA has organised a number of specific events in Scotland (e.g. events related to the UKPSF, a "retreat" for senior managers) which have been well

⁵ Based on HEA Annual Institutional Report for the university for 2012/13

received. However, the institutional relationship with HEA reportedly feels contractual in nature, and in some ways similar to that of an external examiner. There is a sense however that HEA is able to do more to support teaching and learning enhancement in England.

6.4.2 At faculty/subject level

University staff would like to see more subject specialists visiting the institution. The subject centres varied in terms of the value they provided, but it is felt that they operated effectively across the UK, not just in England. Beyond strong links with a few individuals, the perception is that most academics remain unclear what the subject networks are and what they offer.

6.5 Views on HEA's services and their contribution

Overall, the funding provided by HEA for support of work related to learning and teaching is useful but institutions would probably fund many things themselves in any case. The view of senior university staff is that the HEA's role in accrediting staff and programmes is useful, but beyond that its rationale is less clear and there is limited engagement with the institution. Visits are infrequent and the institutional reports focus on outputs rather than providing quality information on outcomes.

Nonetheless, the UKPSF has become embedded, evidenced by the minimum requirement of being an HEA Fellow in job specifications, and the proportion of Fellows at institutions featuring in league tables. Even for research staff, fellowship has become important; for instance it is necessary for confirmation of probation. Although innovation in teaching and learning is considered in annual reviews, staff do not feel this carries the same weight or attracts the same reward and recognition as other activities.

The PVC network is very helpful, and provides a good opportunity for senior staff to interact and share learning and good practice. Despite home nation policy differences, the impact of policy change in England is being felt elsewhere, so keeping up to date on changes in other parts of the UK is of interest. Beyond the PVC Network, the HEA does seem to have limited influence on policy, and there is little awareness of any contribution made to the debate on recent HE policy change in Scotland. In England there is some evidence of HEA's policy contribution to the debate, for example on the grade-point average system.

One particular area of frustration for staff is that the HEA's free consultancy days have not been able to be taken up, due to issues of timing and lack of availability. More positively, participation in the Student-Led Teaching Awards is considered beneficial and has prompted discussion of the possibility of introducing the university's own teaching and learning awards. Recipients of the awards report that this has helped with their own recognition and credibility at the university, for instance by being invited to join university committees.

Academic discipline leads do vary in their perceptions of the HEA, and this is determined by the depth of their interaction and individual involvement historically in a subject centre or now in subject network activities. The same group of people do tend to be involved in each discipline area. However, the HEA's discipline activities are considered to be important, particularly due to their cross-UK remit.

A group of more junior academic staff were also consulted at the university. Individually, this group had all engaged positively with the HEA, having been recipients of awards (the Curriculum or Excellence award in one case, student led teaching award in another) and of

funding, and another had recently become a Senior Fellow. They had benefited at a personal level from the HEA's professional accreditation, and from development grants and funding for research. The latter had enabled them to have time to focus on developing innovation in teaching and learning. They felt there tends to be a perception that teaching contracts are of less value than research contracts, and the HEA has gone some way to redressing this. However, according to this group more remains to be done. Interaction with the HEA is considered to be increasing across the university, but it remains far less common for research active staff to engage.

Areas for further development or improvement by the HEA as identified by university staff included:

- The UKPSF works well at the level of Fellow, but beyond that it is a cumbersome process and creating a portfolio is burdensome, in comparison for instance with becoming a Fellow of a professional organisation. Adapting and enhancing the process would be beneficial. There is a perceived risk of lack of engagement at senior levels as currently there is no driver to become a Senior or Principal Fellow.
- HEA should be more proactive in engaging with institutions, by building effective relationships across the institution and offering much more tailored services, rather than pushing out generic materials via the website.
- Finding ways of replacing the perceived value lost by the subject centres and engaging more widely across institutions would be useful.
- Grant funding provided by HEA is helpful, but the timescales provided for preparing bids is often too short, and sequencing should be aligned with the academic calendar. Resulting grey literature disseminated the HEA can be of varying quality. Potentially, resources could be better focussed by producing fewer outputs but of higher quality.

6.6 Other observations

The HEA's purpose is clear in terms of the UKPSF, but its strategic objectives and agenda around quality enhancement are less so. Overall, there is a perception that the HEA is an England focussed organisation, with far less impact in the Scottish sector. The areas which are cross-UK do seem to be the most clearly defined. The HEA could usefully reflect on its position outside England, and seek further ways of providing support and adding value in Scotland.

7 CASE STUDY 6

7.1 Profile

Post-1992 institution.

7.2 Institutional strategy on learning and teaching

The University launched a new three year Learning and Teaching Strategy during 2013. The overarching strategic aim is to enhance the student experience and ensure that the student voice is embedded firmly in making improvements. Strategic objectives are: to continually enhance learning and teaching; to formalise the continuing professional development of teaching staff, looking at assessment in particular; and to enhance the use of technology in teaching and learning.

7.3 Overview of engagement with HEA

During 2012/13, the university's engagement with the HEA involved the following⁶:

- 19% of teaching related staff were Fellows of the Academy, with 1 Senior Fellow and no Principals. Ten staff members were recognised as Fellows during 2012/13.
- HEA accredited two courses from 2010 – Introduction to the Practice of Teaching in Higher Education and Post Graduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education.
- There are two National Teaching Fellows, but there were no staff recognised during 2012/13.
- HEA provided a small amount of grants and funding during the year, having provided higher amounts in the two previous academic years.
- In addition, the HEA provided funding for a number of workshops and events, the university took part in the P-TES and P-RES surveys, and a range of academic staff contributed as reviewers and to HEA events, including to the HEA annual conference.

7.4 Relationship with the HEA

7.4.1 At the institutional level

The institution engages a great deal with the HEA and therefore gets a lot out of it. The HEA is very important to and supportive of the Learning and Teaching Development Unit in particular at the university. It is important to the team to be part of a community across the UK which is developing best practice in teaching and learning. The introduction of the accredited CPD scheme is a clear example of where the HEA's contribution has led to a cultural shift at the university.

7.4.2 At faculty/subject level

A lot of the HEA's activities are specific to discipline level, which therefore precludes cross disciplinary staff. Many of the enhancement themes are cross disciplinary and academics at the institution have engaged at this level, rather than through subject networks. The relationship with HEA often tends to be much more at the level of the individual academic,

⁶ Based on HEA Annual Institutional Report for the university for 2012/13

rather than at an institutional or discipline level. Becoming a NTF can bring substantive benefits, particularly in terms of reputational advantage and in extending one's own network.

7.5 Views on HEA's services and their contribution

HEA's purpose seems clear and it has been successful in raising the profile and status of learning and teaching in the HE sector. It has also helped make colleagues far more thoughtful about learning and teaching in their practice and praxis. HEA has succeeded in doing this by bringing funding to the research and development of learning and teaching, and through recognition of good teaching and teachers. All of which has helped put teaching on more of a par with research. However, the HEA has suffered from the fact that the professionalisation of HE teaching is not mandatory; it would be a far more important organisation if this was the case.

In terms of specific services, the PVC Network is considered useful and informative, while HEA-run events are considered to be very good and have created space at the university for colleagues to come together to engage in developing learning and teaching. The UKPSF is crucial in professionalising teaching and learning in the HE sector, and the perception is that without the HEA it would not exist. Past grant funding has been incredibly helpful to the university, as is the results of the PTES and PRES surveys, particularly the benchmark data.

For academic recipients of HEA support in the form of grant funding, the key benefits were in terms of the funding freeing up their time to focus on the research and in bringing institutional recognition, through the credibility which the HEA as an external organisation brings. Conferences and events to disseminate the results were also considered to be high quality and well-run.

Other academics suggest that awareness of the HEA among colleagues is limited to those with specific involvement with the teaching and learning team, or with a particular interest in pedagogy. The HEA, according to one academic, should be embedding itself in the HE sector as a professional association for academic staff, like those in any other discipline. Once fellowship is achieved engagement can be limited.

One of the institution's students has also been involved with the HEA and attended one of the grade point average events during 2013, and is also involved in the HEA-NUS Student-Led Teaching Awards scheme. In addition the student is working with the university's Learning and Teaching Development Unit and individual tutors on a project, which is aiming to improve teaching and learning at the institution by focussing on the student voice.

Areas for further development or improvement by the HEA as identified by university staff included:

- The PVC Network is useful, but it might be better to be a one day event as finding two days together can be difficult for senior staff.
- Although an excellent scheme, the NTF process is opaque and feedback provided to applicants is minimal – more transparency is needed. The scheme also recognises individuals but not teams. Additionally, a process of monitoring and assessing continuing good standing should be introduced.
- In comparison with other sectoral organisations, there is not the same sense of a central core to the HEA. For instance with the QAA, institutions would know precisely who they should contact. The HEA instead seems more diffuse and at a national level

this should be made much clearer. De-centralisation has given the impression that there is no longer a 'critical mass' to the HEA.

- The extent to which the HEA influences policy and government is far less evident than its other two strategic priorities. However, some interesting discussions and ideas have been generated by the HEA, in particular on the grade point average scheme. If there is a voice on learning and teaching HEA is it, but that voice is not heard outside of the HE sector.
- Outputs from HEA's funding are useful, but they do tend to focus on generating written reports. More could be done to disseminate good practice in further innovative ways, for instance by funding the growth of new models and innovation. HEA could also do much more to pull together different streams of related activity to spread good practice and the impact of funding much more effectively.
- HEA should make their eligibility criteria clearer and publicise to professional service staff working in institutions that they are also entitled to apply for funding and grants. This would be of benefit to staff working on improving the student experience.

7.6 Other observations

There does always seem to be uncertainty about the HEA's future, which can make one uncertain about contributing and investing time and effort into it. Senior staff at the university would like to see a five year period of stability, with clear endorsement for the HEA from the funding bodies. There has been a lot of change since the HEA was set up, and it should be wary of further change whenever there is a new leader. The HEA needs to develop deeper, firmer foundations.

A further area of future challenge is that the HEA is encouraging HEIs to accredit their own recognition schemes mapped against the UKPSF, and therefore factoring itself out of the process. The HEA might consider finding ways to embed learning and teaching development in university processes and procedures, for instance by working closely with human resources departments.