



Report

Formative evaluation of accredited programmes

Mike Prosser, Mark Rickinson, Valerie Bence, Andria Hanbury, Malgorzata Kulej

The Higher Education Academy

Acknowledgements

We wish to acknowledge the generous support of the staff in the institutions within which this study was conducted.

Executive summary

Purpose

This report summarises the results of a formative evaluation of programmes in teaching, learning and academic practice, accredited by the Higher Education Academy, in higher education institutions (HEIs) in the United Kingdom. The evaluation included (i) a survey of graduates of accredited programmes in 32 UK HEIs and (ii) focus group discussions and interviews with Pro-Vice-Chancellors and Vice-Principals, programme leaders, Heads of Departments and Faculties and programme participants in six HEIs.

This report is aimed primarily at those with strategic responsibility (Pro-Vice-Chancellors and Vice-Principals) and operational responsibility (Directors of Academic Development Units) for such programmes in HEIs.

Key findings

On the positive side, the key findings are that:

- There is evidence that the programmes can be successful in helping participants become more student-focused and less teacher-focused in the way they see their teaching – although there is substantial institutional variation. This represents a very positive outcome for the programmes in terms of the research relating teaching to student learning. Based upon this evaluation and the literature reviewed in this report, an inference can be drawn that the accredited programmes are having a positive impact on teaching and on student learning
- Participants in the survey rated the programmes as being well related to institutional missions, although the focus group discussions identified substantial variation in the perceptions of this relationship
- There is evidence that accredited programmes can have a significant impact at the departmental level, particularly in terms of development linkages between departments and developments in educational practice, students and learning outcomes
- Those participants who rate the programmes overall more positively are those who report that they have become more student-focused in their teaching.

On the other hand a number of problems and challenges have emerged from the formative evaluation. They include:

- The finding that while the programmes are seen to be well related to institutional missions, they are not seen to be well related to other aspects of institutional structures and processes. In particular there is substantial variation in the way departments see the programmes. There is evidence that they are not well informed about the role and focus of the programmes and are not always aware of their benefits.
- The relationship between the generic aspects of teaching and learning and the more discipline-specific aspect is problematic. Whether participants have trouble seeing how the generic aspects can be applied in their disciplines and departments, or whether there are disciplinary differences not brought out in the programmes, is not clear.
- The time and effort participants are expected to put into programme participation is questioned by a significant proportion of participants and by a number of heads of departments. It was noted that the pressure on new and inexperienced academic staff in establishing their careers is substantial, and whether the time and effort required to complete the programmes at the start of an academic career is appropriate was questioned.
- Finally, while the majority expressed overall satisfaction, there was substantial institutional variation, with participants in the post-1992 HEIs perceiving the programmes more positively than in the others, and with more positive outcomes.

In conclusion, the potential benefits of the accredited programmes for HEIs, teachers, students and student learning are clear. There are, inevitably, a considerable number of issues and challenges to be addressed.

CONTENTS

	page
Executive summary	3
Section 1	
1.1 Introduction	6
1.2 Background literature	7
1.3 Aims and objectives	10
Section 2 – Design of the study	
2.1 Research design and methodology	11
2.2 Online questionnaire survey	11
2.3 Focus groups/interviews	13
Section 3 – Quantitative analysis	
3.1 Participants' views about the programmes	14
3.2 What best predicts overall satisfaction	18
3.3 Which participants' the programmes had the greatest impact on	19
3.4 Which groups the programmes had the greatest impact on	20
3.5 Variations between HEIs	20
3.6 Summary	21
Section 4 – Qualitative analysis	
4.1 Relation to institutional mission/strategy	22
4.2 Impacts on departments	24
4.3 Impacts on participants' teaching and learning	27
4.4 Impacts on participants' career development	29
4.5 Emerging issues and challenges	31
4.6 Summary	34
Overall conclusions	35
Table 1 Structure and rationale for the online questionnaire	12
Table 2 Focus group participants	13
Table 3 Focus of programmes (%)	15
Table 4 Developing your skills and knowledge in institutional context (%)	16
Table 5 Evaluation of the programme (%)	17
Table 6 Mean approach to teaching scores before and after completion of the programme	18
Appendix 1 Online questionnaire	37
Appendix 2 Mean scores and standard deviations	46
Appendix 3 Results of cluster analysis	50
References	51

Section 1

1.1 Introduction

One of the unique aspects of the higher education sector in the United Kingdom is the presence of a large number of programmes in teaching and learning and academic practice in its universities and colleges. The first such programmes were developed in the late 1980s in the UK; the Dearing report gave significant impetus to higher education institutions (HEIs) to develop programmes and they have continued to grow in number in response to calls to enhance the professional status and quality of teaching in UK higher education institutions (HEIs) (DfES, 2003), consistent with similar calls internationally (Boyer, 1990).

National recognition through the accreditation of programmes of teaching and learning was started in the 1990s by the Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA). Accreditation was further developed by the then Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education (ILTHE) in the late 1990s. The Higher Education Academy incorporated the ILTHE's programme of accreditation and it has grown the number of accredited programmes to over 140 across the UK.

With the call in the White Paper (*The Future of Higher Education*, 2003) for such programmes to be mandatory for new members of academic staff, and with the development of a national framework for standards in teaching and learning, it seemed an appropriate time to conduct a formative evaluation of such programmes. The idea of the formative evaluation grew out of discussions between the Higher Education Academy and the Network of Deputy and Pro-Vice-Chancellors and Vice-Principals for Teaching and Learning in UK HEIs, and was conducted by the Academy in consultation with the PVCs and VPs of those HEIs volunteering to participate in the evaluation.

This report is aimed primarily at those with strategic responsibility (Pro-Vice-Chancellors and Vice-Principals) and operational responsibility (Directors of Academic Development Units) for such programmes in HEIs. The formative evaluation focuses on issues such as the strategic role and place of the accredited programmes within HEIs, the focus of such programmes in terms of the development of teaching skills

development, knowledge and understanding, and the experiences of graduates of the programmes.

This formative evaluation aimed to work with a representative sample of HEIs to help them review the effectiveness of their accredited programme within their mission and teaching and learning strategies relating to supporting the student learning experience. The underlying rationale of the formative evaluation is (a) that high quality teaching in higher education affords high quality student learning experiences and outcomes in the context of the institutional mission and teaching and learning strategies and (b) high quality academic development programmes support high quality teaching.

1.2 Background literature

So what is the evidence to support the underlying rationale? The literature informing this evaluation has been thoroughly reviewed by Prebble, Hargraves, Leach, Naidoo, Suddaby and Zepke (2004). Their synthesis was titled '*Impact of Student Support Services and Academic Development Programmes on Student Outcomes in Undergraduate Tertiary Study: A Synthesis of the Research*'.

The synthesis of 150 studies (including 33 empirical studies) found no research on the direct relationship between academic staff development programmes and student learning outcomes. Consequently, it reviewed the literature in two parts. The first considered the relationship between teaching and learning in higher education and the second considered the relationship between academic staff development programmes and teaching in higher education.

In summary, the review concluded that good teaching does have a positive impact on student learning outcomes and that academic development interventions can assist teachers to improve the quality of their teaching.

Proposition 1: Good teaching has positive effects on student outcomes

The research evidence on the proposition that good teaching has positive effects on student outcomes is summarised by Prebble et al:

- Students tend to adopt either a deep or a surface approach to their learning (Biggs, 1978; Entwistle and Ramsden, 1983; Marton and Saljo, 1976).
- There is a relationship between deep and surface approaches to learning and quality student learning outcomes (i.e. deep approaches to learning tend to lead to higher quality learning outcomes and vice versa) (Marton & Saljo, 1976; Prosser & Miller, 1989; Ramsden, 1992; Trigwell & Prosser, 1991).
- There is a relationship between students' awareness of the learning environment they are operating in (course structure, assessment, workload, etc) and their adoption of surface or deep learning strategies (e.g. if they see the workload as too heavy, or the assessment tasks as encouraging memorisation, they will adopt surface learning strategies) (Ramsden, 1992).
- There is a positive relationship between students' perceptions of high quality teaching and their use of a deep approach to learning (i.e. students who perceive they have received high quality teaching are more likely to have used deep learning strategies) (Prosser & Trigwell, 1991; Trigwell & Prosser, 1991).
- There is a consonant, coherent relationship between teachers' approaches to teaching and students' approaches to learning (Andrews, Garrison & Magnusson, 1996; Trigwell, Prosser & Waterhouse, 1999).
- Teachers' approaches to teaching are related to their previous experience and conceptions of teaching and learning (Trigwell & Prosser, 1997).
- Teachers can influence students' approach to learning by changing the learning contexts within which students work (Gow & Kember, 1993).
- Changes in teachers' approaches to teaching may require changes in how they experience or conceptualise teaching (Trigwell & Prosser, 1996).

(Prebble et al, 2004, 21-22)

In summary, the evidence reviewed suggests that good teaching involves teachers in developing a coherent view of what they are intending to achieve, developing plans to support their intentions, maintaining an awareness of how their students are perceiving these plans and working towards aligning the students' perceptions with their views and plans.

Proposition 2: Through a variety of academic development interventions, teachers can be assisted to improve the quality of their teaching

The authors of the main report (Prebble et al, 2004) divided academic development programmes into five categories and evaluated the literature in each category (these categories are listed with a comment on the authors' overall evaluations).

- short training courses: limited impact (see, for example, Weimer and Lenze, 1997)
- *in situ* training: generally effective for developing knowledge, attitudes and skills in teaching (see, for example, Ramsden, 1998)
- consulting, peer assessment and mentoring: can be of assistance to improve quality of teaching (see, for example, Weimer and Lenze, 1997)
- student assessment of teaching: student assessments are among the most reliable and accessible indicators of teaching effectiveness (see, for example, Marsh and Dunkin, 1997)
- intensive staff development: can be effective in transforming teachers' beliefs about teaching, learning and teaching practice. Teachers can be assisted to shift from a teacher-centred approach to a learner-centred approach, and to align all elements of the teaching situation in order to achieve positive student outcomes.

Finally, Prebble et al (2004) examined the evidence supporting the different theoretical frameworks underlying the intensive staff development programmes. They concluded:

- behavioural change models (focus on changing the teacher's behaviour in the classroom): small and limited effects and outcomes (see, for example, Murray, 1997)
- developmental models (based on the idea that teachers change their focus of attention over the course of their career from self to subject to student (passive) to student (active)): little evidence of success (see, for example, Gilbert and Gibbs, 1998)
- reflective practice models (advocate the development of reflective practitioners): no evidence that teachers were making decisions on the basis of reflection rather than convention (see, for example, Gilbert and Gibbs, 1998)
- conceptual change models (maintain that teachers' conceptions about teaching are linked to their teaching intentions and strategies) and student learning models (focus on students' approaches to study and their perceptions of their learning environment): this approach has influenced most of the more systematic and intensive programmes of academic staff development introduced over the past decade and is contributing to current international pressure to introduce accredited and mandatory programmes in systems of

higher education (among numerous examples, Prebble sites Gibbs and Coffey, 2004).

Prebble et al conclude that they were able to identify encouraging evidence on the outcomes of programmes influenced by the conceptual change and student learning models.

In summary, the Prebble et al review suggests that good teaching positively affects student learning outcomes and that intensive academic development programmes emphasising conceptual change and student learning can assist in improving the quality of teaching.

1.3 Aims and objectives

Consistent with the broad aim outlined in the Introduction, the specific objectives for this formative evaluation were:

1. Through a questionnaire to graduates of programmes to examine:
 - a. graduates' perceptions of the focus of their accredited programmes
 - b. their perceptions of how well the accredited programmes related to the institutional missions and teaching and learning strategies
 - c. their experience of the quality of the programmes
 - d. whether during the programmes graduates had moved from a primary focus on themselves as teachers to a focus on their students and their learning experiences and outcomes.
2. Through interviews and focus group discussions to examine the views of institutional leaders (Pro-Vice-Chancellors and Vice-Principals of Teaching and Learning, Deans of Faculties and Heads of Academic Development Units) on:
 - a. the relationship of the accredited programmes to their institution's mission and teaching and learning strategy.
3. Through an analysis of the findings to identify key issues for the further development and improvement of the accredited programmes.

The formative evaluation has been conducted in the context of the publication of the UK Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education (2006) and the Academy's review of its accreditation procedures (forthcoming).

Section 2: Design of the study

2.1 Research design and methodology

The formative evaluation of the Academy's accredited programmes in learning and teaching consisted of two components:

- an online questionnaire survey of recent programme participants at 32 HEIs which accepted an invitation to take part in this research
- focus groups/interviews with programme participants, programme leaders, heads of departments/faculties and PVCs at six HEIs.

The online survey was designed to obtain the perceptions of recent participants of an accredited programme. The results of the survey were complemented by more in-depth discussions and interviews with participants and others.

2.2 Online questionnaire survey

In order to gain feedback from recent graduates of accredited programmes for the period 2002-03 to 2004-05, all 118 HEIs that run such programmes were informed of the project and 32 agreed to participate. This sample of 32 institutions was representative for the population of institutions in terms of institution type and geographical spread. The sample included: 6 Russell Group, 6 pre-1992, 17 post-1992 universities and 3 colleges. Twenty-seven were from England, 4 from Scotland and one from Wales.

Participating HEIs were invited to supply contact details for recent programme participants. A total of 852 contacts received the invitation to complete the survey. The overall response rate achieved for individuals in the survey was 46%, with an average response rate for institutions of 50%. It should be noted, however, that there was a considerable variation in the response rate achieved at the participating institutions, ranging from 13% to 100%.

The method took the form of an online survey, eliciting both quantitative and qualitative feedback. The survey was administered by the survey management organisation Ipsos MORI on behalf of the Academy between 23 November and 23

December 2005. During this period follow-up messages were sent out directly from institutions to their graduates on behalf of the Academy.

The Academy Accredited Programmes Questionnaire consisted of 55 five-point scale items grouped into four sections complemented by comment boxes and five multi-choice demographic items. Each section had a distinctive focus and included items that sought to explore issues highlighted by previous research in this area (see Table 1)

Table 1: Structure and rationale for the online questionnaire

Section	Focus	Rationale
<i>Section 1: Aspects of the programme</i>	This section aimed to provide feedback to HEIs on how the graduates of their programmes see its main focus and how that relates to the research on impact	This built upon previous research into the rationale for programmes such as the accredited programme (Gilbert and Gibbs, 1998). A major systematic review of such programmes found that skills-based programmes had little medium- to long-term impact, while conceptions-based programmes seemed to have greater long-term impact (Prebble et al, 2004). The impact of reflection-based programmes was not clear
<i>Section 2: Developing skills and knowledge</i>	This section focused on the relationship of the programmes to institutional issues and requirements	This section was developed by the Academy in consultation with the Network of Deputy and Pro-Vice-Chancellors and Vice-Principals
<i>Section 3: Evaluation of the programme</i>	This section was designed to give HEIs formative feedback on how participants experienced the programmes	Questions were based on the Unit of Study Evaluation System developed by Institute for Teaching and Learning at the University of Sydney (http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/USE/)
<i>Section 4: Approach to teaching</i>	This section was designed to provide some feedback on how participants see the programmes affecting their teaching – particularly in terms of moving from a more teacher-focused perspective to a more student-focused perspective	This section was based on the ‘Approaches to teaching inventory’ developed by Prosser and Trigwell (2004)

Sections 2 and 3 were complemented with comment boxes and the free text responses were coded and analysed along with quantitative data from the closed-response items. The data were analysed using SPSS. Findings are presented in Section 3.

2.3 Focus groups/interviews

The aim of the focus group/interview component was to develop in-depth qualitative insights into the ways in which accredited programmes are viewed and experienced by different members of staff at a small number of contrasting HEIs. A representative sample of six institutions was selected including two Russell Group, two pre-1992 and two post-1992 universities, all of which had expressed a willingness to participate in this part of the project.

A one-day visit was undertaken to each HEI in November and December 2005, during which separate focus groups/interviews were carried out with members of programme teams, recent programme participants, heads of department/faculty and the PVC with responsibility for teaching and learning. The focus groups usually involved between four and eight individuals, providing a total of 29 programme leaders, 28 participants, 29 department/faculty heads and six PVCs (see Table 2). The selection of focus group participants was carried out by the PVC and/or programme team at each institution.

Table 2: Focus Group Participants

	Programme leaders	Programme participants	Heads of Department/Faculty	Pro-Vice-Chancellors
HEI 1	4	6	4	1
HEI 2	6	8	5	1
HEI 3	3	1	8	1
HEI 4	5	5	4	1
HEI 5	2	4	3	1
HEI 6	9	4	5	1
TOTAL	29	28	29	6

All of the focus groups/interviews used a similar semi-structured protocol with questions and activities relating to three main areas:

- impacts of the programme on participants
- impacts of the programme on departments
- relations between the programme and the institutional mission/strategy.

In keeping with the formative nature of the project, the conduct of the focus groups/interviews emphasised open questions and follow-up probes about the strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement of the accredited programmes. A written account of the focus groups/interviews at each institution was produced based on audio recordings and written field-notes. The subsequent analysis of these data took place in two stages. Firstly, the focus group/interview data were analysed at an institutional level in order to identify key messages about programme impacts and relations with mission/strategy for each HEI. A second stage of cross-institution analysis was then carried out looking at areas of similarity and difference within and between the six institutions and their various groups of interviewees. Both stages of analysis were undertaken using a qualitative analysis software package (MAX.QDA) which enabled focus group/interview data to be coded in relation to the main foci of the formative evaluation. The findings will be discussed in Section 4.

Section 3: Quantitative analysis

The key findings to emerge from the survey data are presented under the following headings:

- participants' views about the programme and its perceived impact
- what best predicts overall satisfaction
- which participants the programmes had the greatest impact on
- which groups the programmes had the greatest impact on.

A copy of the online questionnaire is given in Appendix 1.

3.1 Participants' views about the programmes

In summary, all aspects of the programme were considered important. However, development as a reflective practitioner was considered to be the most important aspect, and whether the programme helped the participants to gain or change skills or teaching behaviour was considered the least important. There was high agreement that the programme accurately met the institutional mission statement, and that programme staff were responsive to participants' feedback. There was less agreement that there was an appropriate balance of generic knowledge and discipline-specific support for teaching and supporting student learning, and that the link between the programme and other institutional processes was clear. For items

measuring student- and teacher-focused approaches to teaching before and after attending the programme, the highest increase in positive responses was to the statement: *“I encourage students to restructure their existing knowledge in terms of new ways of thinking about the subject that they will develop”*. This was an item designed to measure a student-focused approach to teaching.

The largest decrease in positive responses was to the statement: *“In this subject students should focus their study on what I provide them”*. This was an item designed to measure a teacher-focused approach to teaching. Finally, it was found that participants considered themselves to be significantly more student-focused and significantly less teacher-focused after attending the programme.

The mean scores are summarised in Appendix 2.

- **Survey Section 1: Aspects of the programme**

Table 3 summarises participants’ perceptions of the importance of various aspects of the programmes.

Table 3: Focus of programmes (%)

Item	% Not important	% Neutral	% Important
Skills – Programme helped you to gain or change your skills and teaching behaviours	12	20	68
Development – Programme clarified or changed your focus from what you do in your teaching to your students and their learning	11	15	74
Reflection – Programme developed you as a reflective practitioner (for example, so as to be able to recognise problems or justify teaching decisions)	9	12	79
Student learning – Programme helped you to understand better or improve your students’ learning (for example, so your students focus on understanding, rather than reproduction of a subject)	9	19	72
Conceptions – Programme developed or changed your conceptions of teaching away from teacher-focused towards a more student-focused approach	12	18	70

All aspects were considered important. However, perceptions that the programme helped gain or change skills and teaching behaviour were rated the least important [68%] and development as a reflective practitioner was rated the most important

[79%]. The two aspects of the programmes which the review of literature identified as likely to be most effective – Student learning and Conceptions – were not considered by the participants to be as important as Development and Reflection.

- **Survey Section 2: Developing your skills and knowledge in institutional context**

Table 4 summarises participants’ perceptions of their development of knowledge and skills in the institutional context.

Table 4: Developing your skills and knowledge in institutional context (%)

Item	%	%	%
	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
The programme provided me with the general skills and scholarly knowledge required for teaching and supporting student learning within this HE institution	15	26	59
The programme provided me with the appropriate balance of generic knowledge and discipline specialist support for teaching and supporting student learning	39	32	29
The time and scholarly effort required for successful completion of the programme was appropriate for this type of qualification	22	17	61
The time and scholarly effort required for successful completion of the programme was justified in terms of my teaching in this HE institution	23	19	59
The programme allowed sufficient opportunity for me to develop the knowledge and skills relevant for my discipline to support student learning	23	26	51
The programme meets accurately the institutional mission of this HE institution	10	21	70
The programme meets accurately student needs within this HE institution	14	25	60

Ratings in this section were quite variable. There was least agreement that the programme provided an appropriate balance of generic knowledge and discipline-specific support for teaching and supporting student learning [29%]. There was most agreement that the programme accurately met the institutional mission of the participants’ HEI [70%]. Fifty-nine percent agreed that time and effort were justified in terms of knowledge and skills developed, with a similar proportion agreeing that the programme provided the general skills and scholarly knowledge for supporting student learning in their institution.

- **Survey Section 3: Your evaluation of the programme**

The participants evaluations of the programmes are summarised in Table 5.

Table 5: Evaluation of the programme (%)

Item	%	%	%
	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
The learning outcomes and expected standards in this programme were clear to me	15	18	68
The teaching in this programme helped me learn effectively	19	26	55
The workload in this programme was manageable	21	23	56
The assessment in this programme allowed me to demonstrate what I had understood	10	20	70
It was clear to me that the staff in this programme were responsive to participants' feedback	10	19	71
The link between this programme and other institutional processes (e.g. probation) was clear to me	26	25	49
Overall I was satisfied with the quality of this programme	16	18	66

There was most agreement that the assessment allowed participants to demonstrate what they had understood [71%] and that staff were responsive to feedback [70%]. However, in contrast to their perceptions of the relationship between the programme and institutional mission, there was least agreement that the link between the programme and other institutional processes (e.g. probation) was clear [49%]. Fifty-five percent agreed that the teaching helped them learn effectively and 56% agreed that the workload was manageable. Overall, 66% were satisfied with the quality of the programme.

- **Survey Section 4: Your approach to teaching**

This section of the survey focused on participants' approaches to teaching and whether they were based on conceptual change and student-focused, or on information transfer and teacher-focused. As detailed in Section 2, the questions formed two scales: a teacher-focused approach scale and a student-focused approach scale. Participants were asked to complete the items twice, reflecting on how they approached or would have approached their teaching before completing the accredited programme and how they were approaching their teaching after completing the programme.

Table 6: Mean approach to teaching scores before and after completion of the programme

Scale	Before		After		Significance of difference
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Information transfer – teacher focus	3.57	.58	3.36	.58	p < 0.001
Conceptual Change – Student Focus	3.37	.79	4.17	.57	p < 0.001

Before: Alpha (ITTF)=.78; Alpha (CCSF)=.89

After: Alpha (ITTF)=.74; Alpha (CCSF)=.80

The mean scores in Table 6 indicate that the participants' experience was that they were substantially more student-focused and less teacher-focused as a result of taking the programmes.

After participants had completed the programme, they agreed *least* with the statement that students should focus their study on what they are provided with [21%] (a teacher-focused approach). They agreed *most* that teaching is helping students develop new ways of thinking in their subject [94%]. The statement with the largest increase in positive responses [42%] after participants had completed the programme was: *"I encourage students to restructure their existing knowledge in terms of the new way of thinking about the subject that they will develop"*. The statement with the largest decrease in agreement after completion of the programme was: *"In this subject students should focus their study on what I provide them,"* with a decrease of 42%.

3.2 What best predicts overall satisfaction

Overall satisfaction with the programme was found to correlate strongly with participants' change towards a more student-focused approach to their teaching. The greater the change to a student-focused approach, the higher the overall satisfaction rating. Overall satisfaction also had a strong relationship with participants' perceptions that the programme provided them with the general skills and scholarly knowledge required for teaching and supporting student learning within their HEI, and their perceptions that the teaching on the programme helped them to learn effectively. There was a weaker relationship between overall satisfaction and participants'

perceptions that the programme accurately met the institutional mission of their HEI and that the workload was manageable.

3.3 Which participants the programmes had the greatest impact on

In order to examine the relationships between the responses to the four core sections of the questionnaire, participants were clustered according to their similarity of responses to the items in sections 1, 2 and 3 and their change in approaches to teaching in section 4. Three groups were clearly identified in the cluster analysis. The results of the cluster analysis are shown in Appendix 3.

The first group, including 194 participants, had substantially above average ratings for the perceived importance of different aspects of the programme, perceptions of how the programme developed their general and discipline-specific skills and knowledge required for teaching and supporting student learning, and their overall evaluation of the programme. This group also had the highest increase in student-focused approach and greatest decrease in teacher-focused approach after attending the programme.

The second group, including 34 participants, had substantially below average ratings in each of sections 1, 2 and 3, and reported the lowest increase in student-focused approach and decrease in teacher-focused approach.

Finally, there was a middle scoring group, including 67 participants. This group had somewhat below average ratings.

The importance of this analysis is that those participants who experienced becoming more student-focused and less teacher-focused also:

- rated all aspects of the programme as more important for the programme than did other participants
- agreed more strongly that that the programme developed their knowledge and skills
- perceived the workload to be more appropriate and manageable
- had substantially more positive perceptions of the programme and
- reported substantially higher overall satisfaction.

That is, those who became more student-focused and less teacher-focused valued the programmes and their relationship to institutional missions and processes substantially more highly than did other participants.

Appendix 3 provides a summary of the scores across all of the items entered into the analysis cross-tabulated with group membership [high, middle, low].

3.4 Which groups the programmes had the greatest impact on

The programmes appeared to have a greater impact on females than males; females evaluated programmes more positively, had higher student-focused and lower teacher-focused scores after attending the programme, and experienced a greater decrease in teacher-focused approach after attending the programme than males.

Attendance on programmes also appeared to have had a greater impact on participants from post-1992 institutions; a higher proportion of those from post-1992 institutions were classified in the high scoring group. Participants from post-1992 institutions also had higher student-focused approach scores after attending a programme than those from other types of institution, and evaluated programmes more positively.

Finally, programmes appeared to have had a greater impact on participants from health sciences disciplines; a higher proportion of participants from this discipline were classified in the high scoring group, whereas a higher proportion of participants from the sciences, technology, social sciences and humanities disciplines were classified in the low scoring group. Participants from health sciences also evaluated programmes more positively, and experienced higher increases in student-focused approaches and greater decreases in teacher-focused approaches than those from the other disciplines.

3.5 Variation between HEIs

The analysis so far has focused on the sample as a whole. There was substantial variation between HEIs on overall satisfaction (mean scores ranging from 2.6 to 4.7, with the median being 4.0) and changes in approaches to teaching (mean scores for a change in student-focused approaches ranged from 0.23 to 1.66, with a median of 0.72; for teacher-focused approaches they ranged from -0.008 to 0.24 with a median

of -0.16). In all programmes there was an increase in student-focused scores, while in 25 of the 32 there was a decrease in teacher-focused scores.

The analysis of institutional variation suggests that while there is substantial evidence that programmes can and do have a positive impact on teaching, and by inference student learning, not all programmes are performing at the same level.

3.6 Summary

The findings from the survey strand can be summarised as follows:

- While programmes were reasonably well evaluated by participants, with 66% expressing overall satisfaction, there was substantial variation between institutions, indicating that some programmes were performing substantially better than others
- Participants rated themselves as being significantly more student-focused and significantly less teacher-focused after attending programmes than before
- The benefits of the programmes were more pronounced in the post-1992 institutions than in the pre-1992 and Russell Group ones, indicating that there may be a better alignment between the participants' experiences and the programmes' goals in the post-1992 institutions
- The balance between generic knowledge and discipline-specific support for teaching and supporting student learning was a particular concern for most participants
- Participants saw a clearer relationship between the programmes and institutional missions than with other aspects of institutional processes
- Overall satisfaction was more strongly related to change towards a more student-focused approach to teaching than change away from a teacher-focused approach to teaching
- Participants who experienced greater change to a more student-focused approach and away from more teacher-focused approaches also rated all aspects of the programmes more highly
- Accredited programmes appeared to have the greatest impact on those who had lower student-focused approaches and higher teacher-focused approaches to teaching before attending, and were also evaluated more positively by these participants

- Programmes appeared to have had a bigger impact and be more positively evaluated by females than males, by participants from post-1992 institutions, and by those from health sciences related disciplines.

Section 4: Qualitative analysis

Findings from the focus groups/interviews

This section outlines the findings from the focus groups/interviews that were undertaken with staff at six HEIs. A sample of six institutions was selected (including two Russell Group, two pre-1992 and two post-1992 universities) for focus groups/interviews with members of programme teams, recent programme participants, heads of department/faculty and PVCs. The key messages emerging from these focus groups/interviews are presented under the following headings:

- relation to institutional mission/strategy
- impacts on departments
- impacts on participants' teaching and learning
- impacts on participants' career development
- emerging issues and challenges.

4.1 Relation to institutional mission/strategy

Views on the relationship between accredited programmes and institutional strategy/mission varied considerably both between individual institutions and groups of interviewees. Differences between institutions are most starkly illustrated by the examples given in Box 1 below of a post-1992 (HEI 1) and a Russell Group (HEI 2) university.

Box 1: Contrasting relationships with institutional mission/strategy

HEI 1

All interviewees at this post-1992 university saw a close relationship between the programme, the institutional mission and the teaching and learning strategy. Participants described how the programme helped them “to understand the strategy and to question and consider [related] issues”. Heads of department/deans of faculty saw clear “overlap between the mission, the strategy and the programme”. From the PVC’s perspective, “the learning and teaching strategy reflects the mission and the programme takes the strategy and reflects it and works with it”. This was echoed by members of the programme team.

HEI 2

Most interviewees at this Russell Group university agreed that, at present, there is not a clear relationship between the programme and the university’s teaching and learning strategy/mission:

“I have no concept of a relationship – no knowledge of a feedback loop.” (programme participant)

“If they meet then it is a happy coincidence, on the whole they have little to do with each other.” (member of programme team)

“There is an expression of a relationship but this doesn’t mean it works in practice.” (head of department)

“Engagement [between the programme and the strategy/mission] is not there yet but is getting better.” (PVC)

In between these two extremes, there was a mixture of perspectives and viewpoints, within which some patterns were discernible. At most universities, programme participants and departmental/faculty heads were more likely to point out a lack of connection between the programme and the strategy/mission (“It’s more like a dotted line”, “The programme is the tail and not the dog”), while members of programme teams and PVCs were more likely to see relations as either positive or improving (“The programme has evolved to reflect key issues of strategic importance”). It was also common for interviewees to distinguish between the programme’s relationship with the institutional teaching and learning strategy (more likely to be co-operative) and its relationship with the institutional mission (more likely to be problematic). This reflected the fact that (in the words of one interviewee) “the institutional mission is driven by wider issues beyond teaching and learning” such as research development, widening participation and so on.

Where difficulties were reported in relations with the institutional strategy, the key challenges seemed to be as follows:

- perceived differences or tensions between the aims of the programme and the aims of the institutional mission/strategy
- insufficient involvement of programme leaders with strategic university committees
- an absence of feedback loops and pathways between the strategic level thinking and what happens on the programme
- a lack of consideration and critical discussion of the university's teaching and learning strategy within the programme
- the relatively limited numbers of staff who have undertaken the programme in particular departments or across the institution as a whole.

In some cases, there were clear signs of these issues being addressed through measures aimed at strengthening the strategic role of the programme and the programme team (Box 2).

Box 2: Strengthening the strategic role of the programme

HEI 4

The PVC at this pre-1992 university explained how programmes of this kind are inevitably faced with the need “to weave a course between the demands of the institution as regards teaching and the many other demands such as the RAE and those of departments”. His feeling was that the programme, the institutional mission and the learning and teaching strategy had “not been sewn together tightly enough in the past”. It was hoped, however, that the situation was improving with the establishment of a new educational enhancement office which involved the programme team “moving out of HR (Human Resources) and becoming part of the team driving the Learning and Teaching Strategy”.

HEI 5

Members of the programme team at this pre-1992 university explained how they had recently moved out of Staff Development “where we were close to HR and seen as part of the administrative structure of the university, which caused problems over academic credibility”. The hope was that their new location would help to strengthen their connections with academic departments and institutional strategy.

4.2 Impacts on departments

The focus groups undertaken for this formative evaluation did provide evidence of benefits from accredited programmes for departments but these were often more limited than those for individual participants. The differential between individual and departmental gains was most pronounced at the two Russell Group and two pre-1992 institutions.

Where departmental/faculty leaders and programme participants reported benefits for departments, these seemed to fall into four areas:

- **Developments in educational practices** – The clearest examples of positive links between programmes and departments came through participants acting as catalysts or conduits for educational ideas, practices and discussions (Box 3). A key factor behind these impacts was the way in which programmes had given new lecturers “the language and confidence” to discuss and challenge existing teaching and learning practices.
- **Enhanced profile for teaching and learning** – A recurring message from senior staff at all six universities was the way in which accredited programmes help to raise the profile of teaching generally and ensure that new staff think about teaching as well as research. This was characterised by one head of department in terms of “a general raising of awareness about pedagogy – it is no longer enough to have subject knowledge”. Senior staff elsewhere noted how their programme “enabled new staff, perhaps with a research background, to think about teaching as an activity”, which in turn helped to “put teaching on a more professional footing”.
- **Inter-departmental links** – Department/faculty heads at one university described how the inter-disciplinary nature of the programme had helped with the process of amalgamating two subject areas into one new department. As the head of an integrated department of this kind recounted, “It is very useful as it enables cross-school collaboration and gets people talking across discipline divides”. In some cases, this had also contributed to subsequent collaborative research activities between different subject areas.
- **Staff induction and mentoring** – Even where senior staff felt that the programme had made little direct impact on departmental teaching and learning practices, there was acknowledgement that the programme was providing an induction and mentoring process for new staff which was helpful to their home departments.

Box 3: Developments in teaching and learning within departments

HEI 6

Comments from interviewees at this post-1992 university suggested a number of positive connections between the programme and teaching and learning within departments. Participants described how they had used or developed new ideas and practices within their departments. Examples included: re-designing the focus and assessment procedures of course modules; introducing reflective learning logs and uniform assessment criteria within a course; and discussing ideas from the programme with colleagues across a variety of BSc and MSc modules.

Heads of department/deans of faculty also cited ways in which programme participants contributed to departmental practice. In one department with an annual independent assessment of teaching quality, the head of department reported “evidence of a distinct improvement in ratings”.

HEI 5

It was clear at this pre-1992 university that the enhanced confidence of younger colleagues was seen as helpful for “bringing ideas and innovations back to the departments”. Indeed, the PVC noted the programme’s success as “a route for the dissemination of good practice which impacts on the institution as a whole”. An example given by one of the participants was the way in which the course had enabled her to reflect on ways of supporting students through the transition from school to university, which had then been useful within her department.

HEI 1

During interviews at this post-1992 university, participants and department/faculty heads both described how the programme had given rise to significant benefits for departments. Participant interviewees illustrated this in terms of developments in:

- teaching practices – “It revolutionised our teaching – modules have been revised and everything reassessed”
- curriculum thinking – “It helps people to get away from owning modules – working out where things fit in different levels and making connections degree-wide”
- educational discussion – “More experienced colleagues have asked for help with learning and teaching structures and theories in departmental restructuring”.

It needs to be stressed, however, that the picture was not universally positive.

Interviewees at four of the universities made it clear that the nature and extent of benefits for departments were influenced by a number of factors. These included: the number and confidence levels of staff who had taken the programme; the extent of heads of departments’ awareness of the programme; the nature of the teaching and learning cultures within individual departments; and the quality of facilities and teaching rooms available within departments. Three cases where benefits to departments were felt to be variable or limited are given in Box 4.

Box 4: Variable or limited benefits for departments

HEI 2

When asked about impacts for departments, programme participants at this Russell Group institution identified a number of challenges:

- a lack of knowledge and understanding about the programme content among departmental heads and senior staff
- an absence of opportunities for 'upward feedback' within departments, despite the relevance of many issues within participants' portfolios to departmental practices
- the questionable value of the programme in the eyes of some departmental heads and senior staff.

These issues were reflected in the focus group with heads of department/deans of faculty, who emphasised the need for more feedback about the course to department heads and improved attitudes and awareness at the senior departmental level.

HEI 4

The programme team at this pre-1992 university felt that ideas from the programme are "getting through to departments but this is by no means uniform [...] some practice is now being challenged at department meetings and boards, which is a good thing". They also noted that the assessment of portfolios had improved over recent years, reflecting "a growth of competence and involvement of wide range of assessors". That said, disciplinary differences were a recurring challenge, particularly where "departments see the programme as something to be got out of the way so that they can concentrate on research".

HEI 3

Alongside reports of departmental benefits, one head of department at this Russell Group university pointed out that a department "can be seriously lumbered if a member of staff has been accredited but is then felt to be an incompetent teacher". With reference to a junior member of his department who had completed the programme, he questioned how rigorous the programme was in terms of ensuring a minimum standard of teaching competence. This individual case was seen as significant by other department/faculty heads when set against the context of the university moving towards a "more straightforward" progression to the top of the Senior Lecturer scale, which means that "arrangements for initial lecturer training need to be significant and serious, including the possibility of failing the course". Others, however, pointed out that this would imply a shift in the purpose of the course from quality enhancement to quality assurance, which may well require "substantial reform".

4.3 Impacts on participants' teaching and learning

The focus groups and interviews generated evidence of a range of positive impacts on aspects of participants' teaching and learning. These impacts can be summarised under three main headings.

- **Improved teaching and learning practices** – Some participants talked specifically about improvements in their teaching and learning practices, such as "My teaching delivery definitely improved in terms of content, outcomes, reflecting and constant change" or "I definitely gained knowledge, improved practices and a more structured approach to teaching". An important area for

several participants was coming to appreciate the importance of “having to explain to students what it is that you want to teach rather than assuming that they are going to learn it”. Another interviewee expressed this in terms of “the importance of transparency – being open with students, telling them why they are being told something”. For others, the value of the programme lay in “practical benefits such as [ways of] using multimedia learning resources”, developing an appreciation of “how to present information and assess students in different ways” or “becoming more aware of student diversity and other variables that will impact on student learning”.

- **Improved curriculum planning** – For several participants, it was in their planning that developments had come. A frequent example of this was “the ability to write learning outcomes and module guides” and undertake “lesson planning around specific learning outcomes”. Another dimension was being able to use ideas from the programme to re-design courses within one’s department.
- **Increased confidence** – A key factor underlying developments in teaching and planning at all six HEIs was participants’ confidence. The programme experience seemed to enhance new lecturers’ confidence in several ways. One benefit was affirmation of existing practices through, for example, becoming aware that there is a theoretical basis to one’s current techniques. For others it was in terms of confidence to experiment with new approaches to teaching and learning through realising that “it’s okay to take risks and question”. Participants talked about a willingness to take risks and “be more adventurous’ based on the idea that “experimenting with students is good within a safe environment” and having the skills “to evaluate new things”. Another dimension was becoming familiar with “the language of teaching and learning that some more experienced colleagues do not know”. This helped participants to feel better equipped to take part in educational discussions within their departments and respond enthusiastically to opportunities for new course development.

The vast majority of participant interviewees were quickly forthcoming with examples of ways in which their programme experiences had contributed to their teaching. There was, however, one institution where views about the helpfulness of the

programme in this respect were more mixed (Box 5, see also workload and time pressures in section 4.5 below).

Box 5: Limited impacts on participants' teaching and learning

HEI 4

Programme participants at this pre-1992 university varied in their views on the extent to which they had benefited from the programme. Three of the five interviewees cited examples of positive impacts on aspects of their practice as teachers. The two others, however, were more negative about the impact of the programme. Their view was that they had gained very little, while the time-consuming nature of the work had created conflicts with research development and anxieties over probation. While acknowledging that there had been changes to the programme since their time, they felt strongly that the expectations for written work were "unrealistic for the early cohorts".

One final point that emerged from two institutions was that way in which benefits for participants may well take time and subsequent reflection to materialise. One participant described her experience of the programme as one of "hating the process but loving the outcome". As she explained:

"I was not engaged while doing the course, not until writing-up and reflecting on the experience. You want to be doing other things, a three-hour wedge of time on the programme each week was really difficult to manage. But the benefits come later and are ongoing; the value of the supportive environment is huge."

Along similar lines, another individual contrasted what she found to be valuable during the course ("finding others in the same boat") with what had become more meaningful since its completion ("trying different approaches to come up with my own approach to teaching and learning by the use of reflection").

4.4 Impacts on participants' career development

In contrast to impacts on participants' teaching and learning, this formative evaluation found considerably less evidence of contributions to longer-term career development. While it is important to acknowledge that most of the participants were speaking about potential (as opposed to actual) benefits as they had only recently completed the programme, the general message was of limited impact. The main reason for this in all but one of the universities (a post-1992 institution) can be summed up by the following quote: "Although the programme is helpful in terms of induction and probation, [...] career progression will be based on research portfolios" (see also Box

6). Longer-term benefits were also not helped where (i) there was a lack of clarity about options for progression beyond the certificate; or (ii) participants felt they had “slipped back into fire-fighting mode” since finishing the course.

Box 6: Limited impacts on longer-term career development

HEI 4

With respect to longer-term career development, the general view from all the participants at this pre-1992 university was that benefits beyond ‘passing probation’ were not clear. The key issue was the centrality of research rather than teaching to career progression. Indeed, one interviewee argued that the programme “could have a negative effect on professional development in terms of taking time away from research development”. This view was echoed by heads of department/deans of faculty who underlined the extent to which promotion and progression are determined by research activity and quality. This can be problematic since “the course can take time away from research activities” and many participants are unable to “convert assignments into other uses such as research publications”.

That said, there were some examples of benefits that stretched beyond the scope of participants’ current teaching and learning practices. These focused on:

- **Alternative career pathways** – Interviewees at the two post-1992 universities saw the programme as highlighting new “avenues for career development”. Senior staff at one university described their programme as “the start of an alternative career pathway where promotion is no longer just through the research route”, although it was acknowledged that this was likely to vary between discipline areas. Connected with this, interviewees at several universities had seen programme participants take their educational expertise into new positions of responsibility both within departments and also across faculties and institutions.
- **Research spin-offs** – Participants at the two Russell Group universities reported productive connections between the programme and their research activities. One interviewee spoke about the importance of teaching as part of research, describing how her skills in communicating with research groups and supporting and supervising the development of junior colleagues had developed as a result of the programme. Two others had developed new educational dimensions to their ongoing research as a result of discussions and readings during the programme.

- **Inter-departmental networks** – Participants and departmental/faculty heads at several universities emphasised the way in which the programme gave new staff a rare opportunity to meet colleagues from across the university. These ongoing collegial networks were seen as an important longer-term benefit stemming from the programme.

An underlying theme in discussions about longer-term career development was the influence of wider institutional structures and processes. The quotes below from two PVCs illustrate this point well:

“Up to now, promotion criteria perhaps have not signalled the importance of academic practice strongly enough. This is being addressed currently, with some roles being re-written to include this up to the professorial level. This is seen as being symbolically important for the institution. It is no longer just a probationary issue.” (Pre-1992 university)

“The university needs to be more flexible over career development ... Not everyone will be a 5* researcher for 40 years of their career.” (Russell Group university)

Alongside career structures and promotion criteria, initiatives such as institutional funding for sabbaticals, educational innovation and annual teaching and learning conferences were also seen as important vehicles for supporting the continuing development of programme participants.

4.5 Emerging issues and challenges

In addition to the findings discussed above, it was clear that there were a number of issues and challenges that cut across the six universities and their accredited programmes. These concerned: workload and time pressures; departmental support and commitment; relevance to disciplines and practice; and future developments and needs.

Workload and time pressures – Interviewees at all of the universities made references to the pressures on young academics, particularly to develop a research profile, and the challenges that this can pose for undertaking a programme in teaching and learning. Issues of workload, time commitments and competing pressures were mentioned not only by participants but also by departmental/faculty heads, PVCs and

programme leaders. These issues were seen to raise questions about the status of programmes (“recognition for doing this is important”), their timing and length (“training is needed at the beginning of one’s career but it needs to be more focused”) and the degree of support (“If people have to do it then it is important that they get the time allowed”). As one participant described, “new lecturers have too much straight away” and this situation is not helped where “department colleagues are unaware of the course content and see it simply as time out of the department”. One PVC made the additional point that workload pressures are likely to be most acute for participants from departments where teaching is expanding and the demand for new lecturers is greatest.

Departmental support and commitment – The role of departments in relation to the accredited programmes was a recurring issue at all six HEIs. Programme leaders and participants frequently highlighted ways in which departmental support for the programme varied across the institution. One manifestation of this was differing levels of teaching remission with the consequence that “participants are not on a level playing field”. Variation in commitment to programmes was another example, particularly where “departments see the programme as something to be got out of the way so that they can concentrate on research”. Differences of these kinds were acknowledged by heads of department, but some felt that this was not helped by them having insufficient up-to-date information about programmes. Difficulties were also noted for departments with large numbers of part-time lecturers for whom the programme takes an even more significant proportion of their time.

Relevance to disciplines and practice – The question of relevance came up at all six universities and took two different forms. One dimension was disciplinary relevance. While the inter-disciplinary nature of programmes was often valued by participants, it was also noted that “mixed disciplinary groups do not always enhance perceptions of the relevance of the course” within departments. There were, then, situations where the programme was perceived to be “too social science biased” or “focused on running seminars but not running computer practicals”. Underlying this was the view that “it is very difficult for one programme to cater adequately in terms of the many different disciplines”. In response, members of programme teams often explained that they had “tried to bring in variation in disciplinary cultures” through, for example, “more subject-specific days”. At one university, however, they also made the point that discipline-specificity can be more about the perceived identity of the

presenter than the actual content that is covered. In addition, one of the PVCs saw an important role for departments in strengthening the subject-specific aspects of the programme. His view was that: “We need to say to departments that they must integrate more departmental effort to bring this about within the programme – the balance needs to tip more towards departmental involvement”.

A second dimension of relevance was the balance between the practical and the theoretical. As one participant reported, “The most useful stuff was when we talked about practical issues such as how to get students to talk in a seminar rather than theories of learning”. At another university, there were clear differences between departmental/faculty heads who wanted the programme “to provide real world coal-face skills” and members of the programme team who saw it much more in terms of “critical reflection and the development of sound educational judgements”. In response to such differences as well as concerns about workload for participants, the PVC at this university saw one “possible way forward [as] a mandatory, short intensive course which is highly focused and looks at institutional needs, followed by a voluntary, but highly encouraged, element with a more modular developmental approach”.

Future developments and needs – The dynamic and evolving nature of these programmes was clear at all of the universities, not least in terms of the way in which these programmes had developed from small optional courses into established institution-wide programmes. In many cases, this had been a process involving considerable change and modification in response to a variety of challenges. As one PVC commented, “The accredited programme is the most evaluated programme in the whole university and radical changes have been made [during] the evolution of the programme”.

In terms of future development, a key issue for several institutions was meeting the needs of a changing staff body both in terms of increasing numbers of part-time/associate staff and geographically more disparate institutional structures. At one institution, for example, the PVC outlined plans to offer a version of the programme to support staff involved in the student learning experience, such as librarians, technicians and research students. Elsewhere, there were questions concerning how these programmes might provide for staff at partner institutions such as associated

colleges or at satellite campuses within the UK or internationally.

Another challenge for the future was that of staying innovative and up to date. One interviewee saw this as “keeping an eye on what is next such as new forms of virtual learning environments and other new areas so as to keep fresh and not go into auto-pilot mode”. A different perspective came from members of the programme team elsewhere who felt that “one sign of the programme’s success would be its demise”. In other words, Academy accreditation in five years’ time could be about the institution rather than the programme, where the programme team would be responsible for quality assuring educational mentoring and induction carried out locally within departments.

4.6 Summary

The findings from the focus group/interview strand of this formative evaluation can be summarised as follows:

- Views on the relationship between accredited programmes and institutional strategy/mission varied considerably between institutions (the closest connection was reported by staff at a post-1992 university) and among interviewees (participants and departmental heads were more likely to see a lack of connection). A commonly-drawn distinction was between the programme’s relationship with the institutional teaching and learning strategy (more likely to be co-operative) and its relationship with the institutional mission (more likely to be problematic).
- In terms of the relationship between accredited programmes and academic departments, there was evidence of benefits for departments such as developments in educational practice, enhanced profile for teaching and learning and inter-departmental links. Such impacts, however, were usually more limited than those for individual participants, particularly in the Russell Group and pre-1992 universities. It would seem that departmental benefits are significantly influenced by factors such as heads of departments’ awareness of accredited programmes and departmental teaching and learning cultures.
- From the perspective of programme participants, there were many examples of positive impacts on different aspects of their teaching and learning. These concerned improvements in their teaching and learning practices, developments in their curriculum planning and enhanced confidence in relation

to, for example, taking risks and experimenting. It should also be noted, however, that some participants emphasised that such benefits may well take time to materialise after the programme and can be limited where workload pressures are too great during the programme.

- Turning to the question of participants' career development, the general message from interviewees was that programme impacts in this area were limited. The main reason for this in almost all cases was the centrality of research rather than teaching to career progression. That said, there were some examples of benefits that stretched beyond the scope of participants' current teaching and learning practices. These focused on new avenues for career development, spin-offs from the programme for research activities and inter-departmental networks.
- Finally, the qualitative strand of this formative evaluation has highlighted a number of issues and challenges that were common to the accredited programmes at all six institutions. These concerned: workload and time issues; departmental support and commitment; relevance to disciplines and practice; and future developments and needs. Taken together, these underline both the dynamic, evolving nature of accredited programmes and the complex, mediating influences of their institutional contexts.

Overall conclusions

Overall, there is substantial agreement in the outcomes of the more extensive survey study and the more intensive focus group and interview study. On the positive side, the key findings are that:

- There is evidence that the programmes can be successful in helping participants become more student-focused and less teacher-focused in the way they see their teaching – although there is substantial institutional variation. This represents a very positive outcome for the programmes in terms of the research relating teaching to student learning. Based upon this evaluation and the literature reviewed earlier in this report, an inference can be drawn that the accredited programmes are having a positive impact on teaching and on student learning
- Participants in the survey rated the programmes as being well related to institutional missions, although the focus group discussions identified substantial variation in the perceptions of this relationship

- There is evidence that accredited programmes can have a significant impact at the departmental level, particularly in terms of development linkages between departments and developments in educational practice, students and learning outcomes
- Those participants who rate the programmes overall more positively are those who report that they have become more student-focused in their teaching.

On the other hand a number of problems and challenges have emerged from the formative evaluation. They include:

- The finding that while the programmes are seen to be well related to institutional missions, they are not seen to be well related to other aspects of institutional structure and processes. In particular there is substantial variation in the way departments see the programmes. There is evidence that they are not well informed about the role and focus of the programmes and are not always aware of their benefits.
- The relationship between the generic aspects of teaching and learning and the more discipline-specific aspect is problematic. Whether participants have trouble seeing how the generic aspects can be applied in their disciplines and departments, or whether there are disciplinary differences not brought out in the programmes, is not clear.
- The time and effort participants are expected to put into programme participation is questioned by a significant proportion of participants and by a number of heads of departments. It was noted that the pressure on new and inexperienced academic staff in establishing their careers is substantial, and whether the time and effort required to complete the programmes at the start of an academic career is appropriate was questioned.
- Finally, while the majority expressed overall satisfaction, there was substantial institutional variation, with participants in the post-1992 HEIs perceiving the programmes more positively than in the others, and with more positive outcomes.

In conclusion, the potential benefits of the accredited programmes for HEIs, teachers, students and student learning are clear. There are, inevitably, a considerable number of issues and challenges to be addressed.

APPENDIX 1: Online Questionnaire

Dear Colleague,

The Experiences of Programmes in Learning and Teaching Accredited by the Higher Education Academy Questionnaire, 2005

We are conducting an online survey of graduates of accredited programmes for the period 2002/2003 to 2004/2005, with the aim of sharing good practice and providing suggestions as to how such programmes can be improved. Your responses to the questionnaire, along with other graduates responses, will help us develop a picture of the experiences of those taking these programmes.

The survey is being carried out by the Higher Education Academy and your University has asked to participate. An independent research organisation, Ipsos UK, has been commissioned to conduct the survey on behalf of the Academy.

Please be assured that your responses to this survey will be completely confidential and no information will be passed on to your University which may identify you. Your individual responses will be held confidentially within the Higher Education Academy.

The survey takes no more than 15 minutes to complete, and it is vital that we receive as many responses as possible so that the results will have the maximum impact.

To complete the survey, please click on the link www.questionnairelink.co.uk. The deadline for completing the survey is **23 December 2005**.

Should you experience any problems accessing the online survey, please contact Karen Darley at Ipsos UK on 020 8515 3478 or email karen.darley@ipsos.com

Should you have any questions regarding the survey in general, please contact Malgorzata Kulej at the Academy on 01904 717500 (ext 2210) or email malgorzata.kulej@heacademy.ac.uk

Thank you for your participation.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Prosser
Director Research and Evaluation

Victoria Eaton
Director Registration and Accreditation

The Experiences of Programmes in Learning and Teaching Accredited by the Higher Education Academy Questionnaire, 2005

The questionnaire consists of five sections. Your responses to the questionnaire, along with other graduates responses, will help us develop a picture of the experiences of those taking these programmes.

A Firstly, please confirm that you have completed a Programme in Learning and Teaching Accredited by the HE Academy?

- a) Yes [continue]
- b) No [close]

Section 1: Aspects of the Programme

Please think about what you felt were the important aspects of the programme you completed. Please rate each of the following in terms of how important (i.e., how much emphasis was put on each aspect) you perceived them to be in your accredited programme.

		Not at all Important			Very Important		Don't Know
		1	2	3	4	5	
1.1	Skills – Programme helped you to gain or change your skills and teaching behaviours						
1.2	Development – Programme clarified or changed your focus from what you do in your teaching to your students and their learning						
1.3	Reflection – Programme developed you as a reflective practitioner (for example, so as to be able to recognise problems or justify teaching decisions)						
1.4	Student Learning – Programme helped you to understand better or improve (your) students' learning (for example, so your students focus on understanding, rather than reproduction of a subject)						
1.5	Conceptions – Programme developed or changed your conceptions of teaching away from teacher-focused towards a more student-focused approach						

Section 2 Developing Your Skills and Knowledge

In this section, please think about how your programme helped you develop your general and disciplinary-specific skills and knowledge required for your teaching and your student learning.

Please state the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree		Don't Know
		1	2	3	4	5	
2.1	The programme provided me with the general skills and scholarly knowledge required for teaching and supporting student learning within this HE institution						
<u>Please use this space if you have any additional comments:</u>							
2.2	The programme provided me with the appropriate balance of generic knowledge and discipline specialist support for teaching and supporting student learning						
<u>Please use this space if you have any additional comments:</u>							
2.3	The time and scholarly effort required for successful completion of the programme was appropriate for this type of qualification						
<u>Please use this space if you have any additional comments:</u>							
2.4	The time and scholarly effort required for successful completion of the programme was justified in terms of my teaching in this HE Institution						
<u>Please use this space if you have any additional comments:</u>							
2.5	The programme allowed sufficient opportunity for me to develop the knowledge and skills relevant for my discipline to support student learning						
<u>Please use this space if you have any additional comments:</u>							
2.6	The programme meets accurately the institutional mission of this HE institution.						
<u>Please use this space if you have any additional comments:</u>							
2.7	The programme meets accurately student needs within this HE institution.						
<u>Please use this space if you have any additional comments:</u>							

Section 3 Your Evaluation of the Programme

Now thinking about the programme at a more general level, please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following seven statements. Please use the space provided to explain reasons for each rating and provide any suggestions for improvement.

		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree		Don't Know
		1	2	3	4	5	
3.1	The learning outcomes and expected standards in this programme were clear to me						
	<i>Please explain the reasons for your rating and any suggestions for improvement</i>						
3.2	The teaching in this programme helped me learn effectively						
	<i>Please explain the reasons for your rating and any suggestions for improvement</i>						
3.3	The workload in this programme was manageable						
	<i>Please explain the reasons for your rating and any suggestions for improvement</i>						
3.4	The assessment in this programme allowed me to demonstrate what I had understood						
	<i>Please explain the reasons for your rating and any suggestions for improvement</i>						
3.5	It was clear to me that the Staff in this programme were responsive to participants' feedback						
	<i>Please explain the reasons for your rating and any suggestions for improvement</i>						
3.6	The link between this programme and other institutional processes (e.g. probation) was clear to me.						
	<i>Please explain the reasons for your rating and any suggestions for improvement</i>						
3.7	Overall I was satisfied with the quality of this programme						
	<i>Please explain the reasons for your rating and any suggestions for improvement</i>						

Section 4 Your Approach to Teaching

This section is designed to explore the way that academics go about their teaching.

Please state to what extent your approach has been reflected in each of the following 18 statements, thinking about how you approached, or would approach, your teaching (a) before taking the accredited programme, and (b) after taking the accredited programme.

		(a) Teaching before accredited programme					(b) Teaching after accredited programme						
		Only Rarely		Almost Always			Don't Know	Only Rarely		Almost Always			Don't Know
		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5	
4.1	In this subject students should focus their study on what I provide them.												
4.2	I describe the subject in terms of specific objectives that relate to formal assessment items.												
4.3	In my interactions with students in this subject I try to develop a conversation with them about the topics we are studying.												
4.4	I present a lot of facts to students so that they know what they have to learn for this subject.												
4.5	I set aside some teaching time so that the students can discuss, among themselves, key concepts and ideas in this subject.												
4.6	In this subject I concentrate on covering the information that might be available from key texts and readings.												
4.7	I encourage students to restructure their existing knowledge in terms of the new way of thinking about the subject that they will develop.												
4.8	In teaching sessions for this subject, I deliberately provoke debate and discussion.												

Section 4: Your Approach to Teaching (Continued)

		(a) Teaching before accredited programme					(b) Teaching after accredited programme						
		Only Rarely		Almost Always			Don't know	Only Rarely		Almost Always			Don't Know
		1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5	
4.9	When I run teaching sessions in this subject I give students a good set of notes.												
4.10	In this subject, I provide the students with the information they will need to pass the formal assessments.												
4.11	I should know the answers to any questions that students may put to me during this subject.												
4.12	I make available opportunities for students in this subject to discuss their changing understanding of the subject.												
4.13	I encourage students in this subject to generate their own notes rather than copy mine.												
4.14	I use a lot of teaching time in this subject to question students' ideas.												
4.15	In this subject my teaching focuses on the good presentation of information to students.												
4.16	I see teaching as helping students develop new ways of thinking in this subject.												
4.17	My teaching in this subject focuses on delivering what I know to the students.												
4.18	My teaching in this subject should help students question their own understanding of the subject matter.												

Section 5 Your HE Experience

We would like to remind you that your responses to this survey will be completely confidential and no information will be passed on to your University which may identify you.

5.1 What year did you start teaching in HE?

- a) Year _____
- b) Can't remember

5.2 What year did you begin the Programme?

- a) 2002
- b) 2003
- c) 2004
- d) Other (please specify)

5.3 What year did you complete the Programme?

- a) 2003
- b) 2004
- c) 2005
- d) Other (please specify)

5.4 Are you male or female?

- a) Male
- b) Female

5.5 Finally, from the drop-down list, please select your field of study:

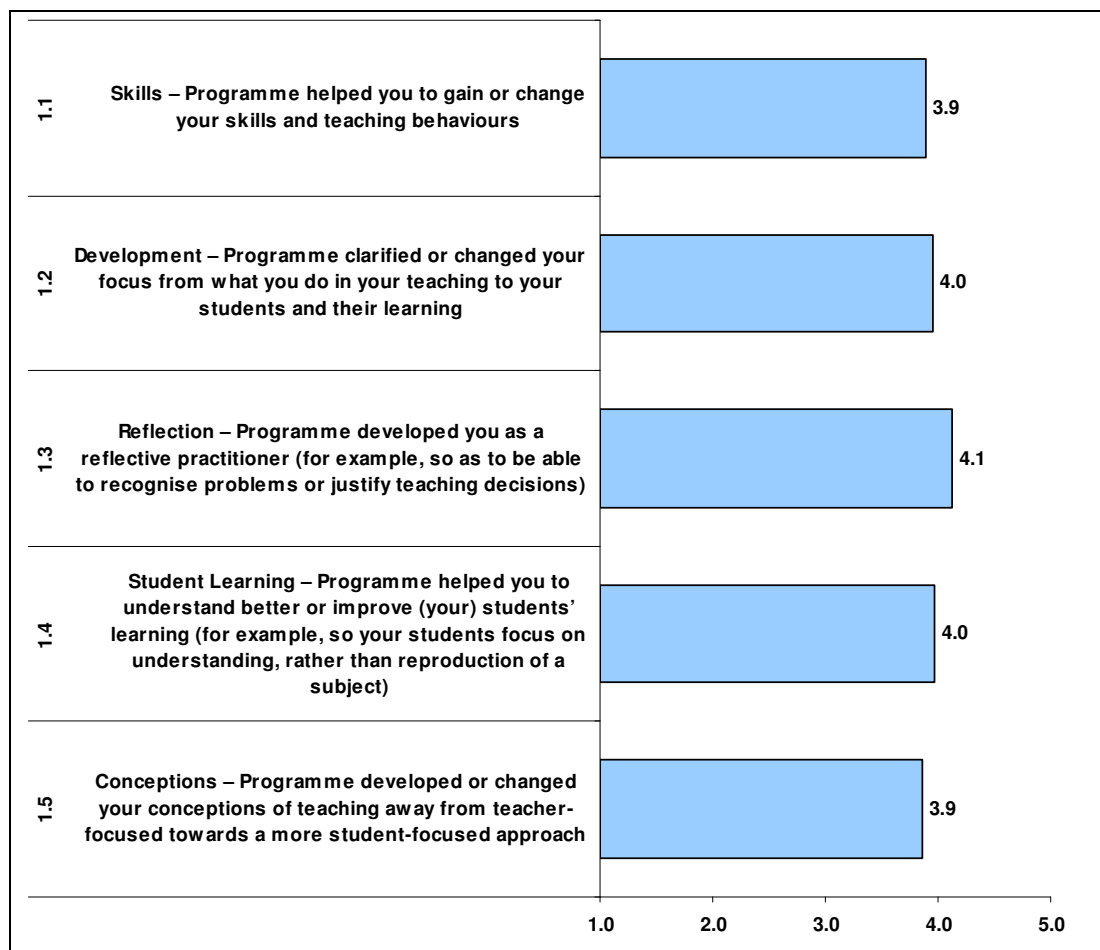
Agriculture and related subjects
Architecture, building and planning
Biological sciences
Business and administrative studies
Computer sciences
Creative arts and design
Education
Engineering and technology
Historical and philosophical studies
Language
Law
Mass communications and documentation
Mathematical sciences
Medicine and dentistry
Physical studies
Social studies
Subject allied to medicine
Veterinary studies
Combined

Not applicable

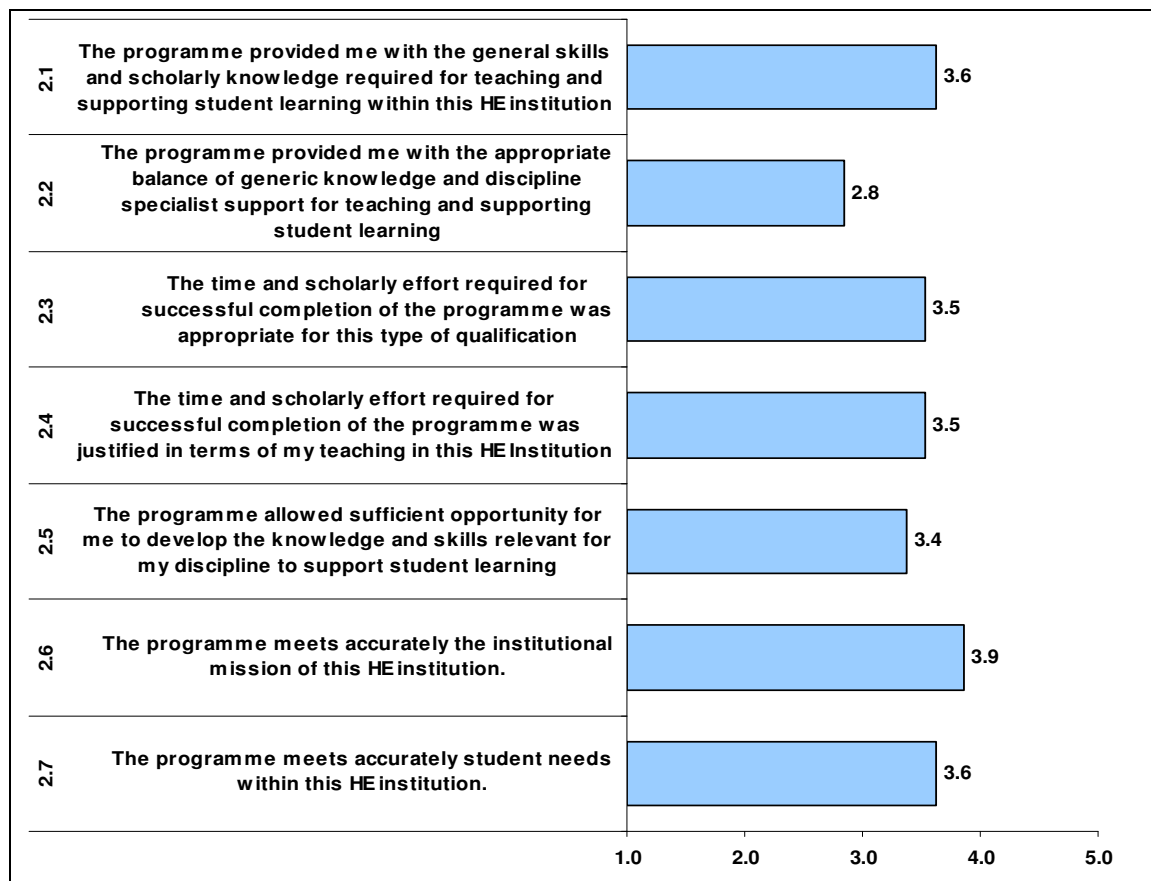
Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire, your feedback is greatly appreciated.

APPENDIX 2: Mean scores and standard deviations

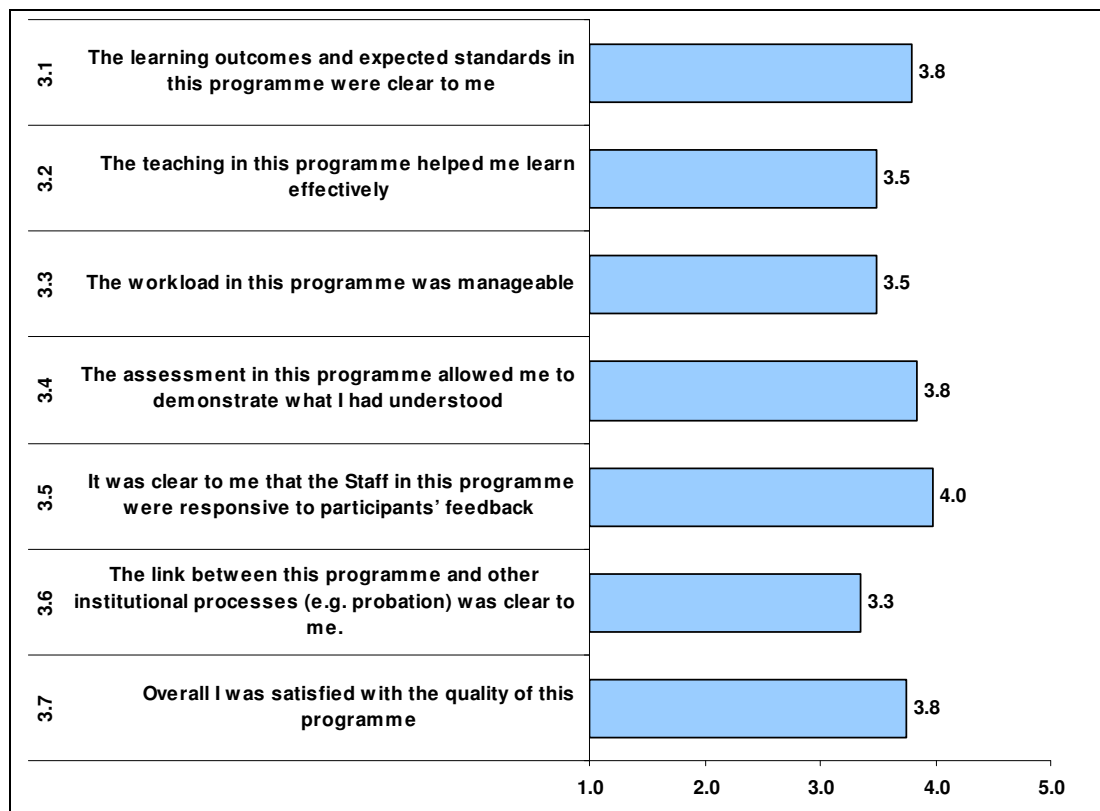
Survey section one



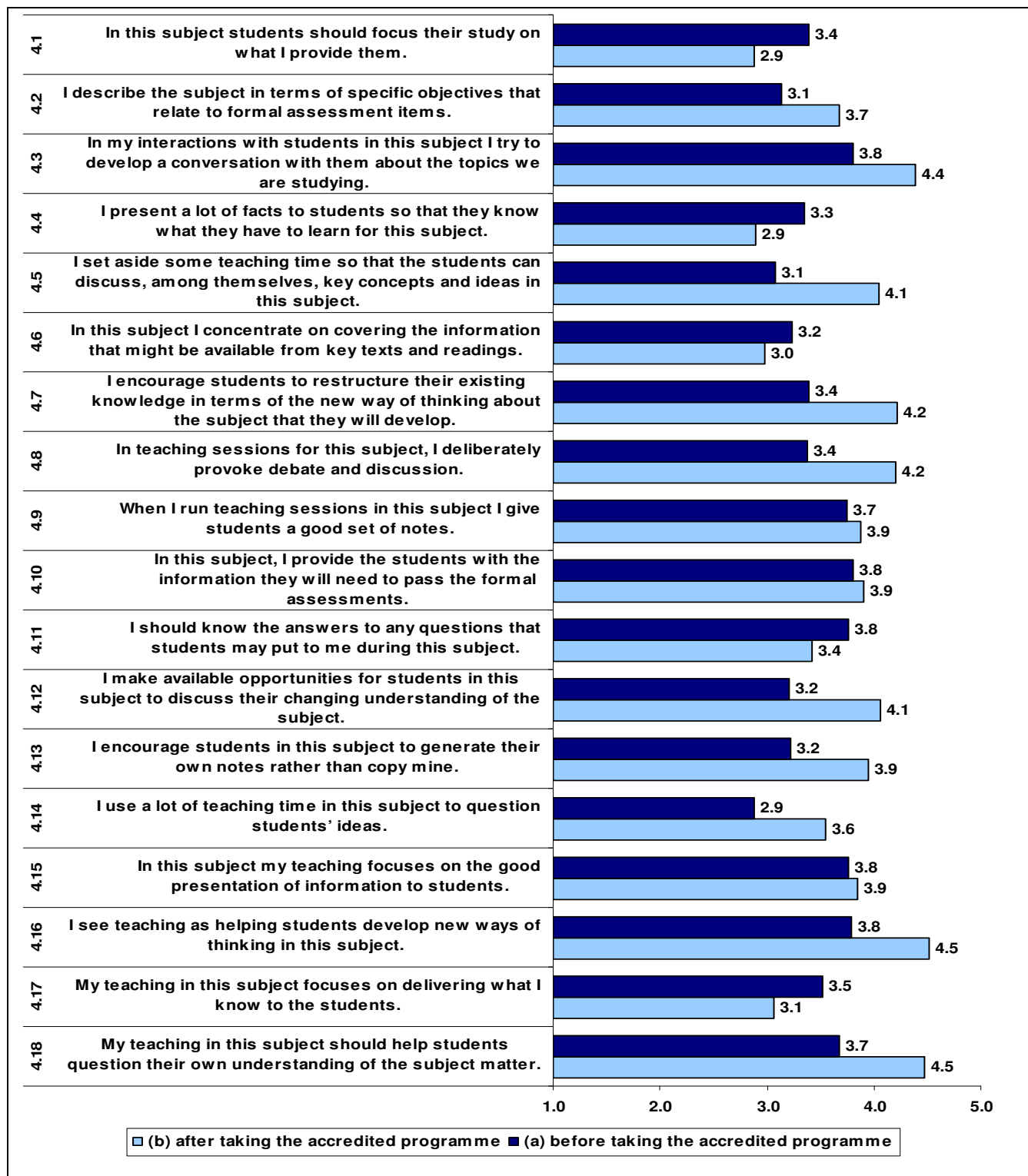
Survey section two



Survey section three



Survey section four



a = before taking the accredited programme, b = after taking the accredited programme, c = percentage change

APPENDIX 3: Results of cluster analysis

Mean scores for items from sections one, two and three and change in student and teacher focussed approach to teaching cross tabulated with group membership

Group		1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5
High	N	194	194	194	194	194	194	194	194	194	194
	Mean	4.32	4.35	4.52	4.36	4.35	4.10	3.21	4.05	4.08	3.85
Low	N	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34
	Mean	2.18	2.35	2.94	2.53	2.29	1.79	1.44	1.88	1.88	1.74
Midd	N	67	67	67	67	67	67	67	67	67	67
	Mean	3.67	3.58	3.48	3.60	3.45	3.39	2.54	3.13	3.18	2.82
Total	N	295	295	295	295	295	295	295	295	295	295

[Continued]

Group		2.6	2.7	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	Change student focus	Change teacher focus
High	N	194	194	194	194	194	194	194	194	194	194	194
	Mean	4.23	4.13	4.29	4.03	3.91	4.26	4.42	3.66	4.39	1.03	-0.24
Low	N	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	32	33
	Mean	2.35	1.97	2.91	1.82	2.62	2.56	2.62	3.21	1.68	0.1114	-0.281
Midd	N	67	67	67	67	67	67	67	67	67	64	65
	Mean	3.51	3.12	3.12	2.84	2.94	3.28	3.39	2.85	3.07	0.57	-0.08
Total	N	295	295	295	295	295	295	295	295	295	295	295

Mean Z scores for items from sections one, two and three and change in student and teacher focussed approach to teaching cross tabulated with group membership

Group		1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.5
High	N	194	194	194	194	194	194	194	194	194	194
	Mean	0.40	0.39	0.39	0.40	0.45	0.43	0.32	0.41	0.44	0.41
Low	N	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34
	Mean	-1.57	-1.58	-1.19	-1.43	-1.44	-1.64	-1.25	-1.33	-1.29	-1.40
Midd	N	67	67	67	67	67	67	67	67	67	67
	Mean	-0.20	-0.37	-0.65	-0.37	-0.38	-0.21	-0.28	-0.32	-0.27	-0.47
Total	N	295	295	295	295	295	295	295	295	295	295

[Continued]

Group		2.6	2.7	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	Change student focus	Change teacher focus
High	N	194	194	194	194	194	194	194	194	194	186	190
	Mean	0.37	0.47	0.43	0.46	0.37	0.43	0.41	0.25	0.53	0.34	-0.58
Low	N	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	34	32	33
	Mean	-1.48	-1.53	-0.78	-1.44	-0.76	-1.31	-1.25	-0.11	-1.73	-0.99	0.35
Midd	N	67	67	67	67	67	67	67	67	67	64	65
	Mean	-0.34	-0.47	-0.60	-0.57	-0.48	-0.57	-0.54	-0.40	-0.56	-0.34	0.26
Total	N	295	295	295	295	295	295	295	295	295	282	288

REFERENCES

- Andrews, J., Garrison, D. R., & Magnusson, L. (1996). The teaching and learning transaction in higher education: a study of excellent professors and their students. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 1(1), 81-103.
- Biggs, J. B. (1978). Individual and group differences in study processes. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 48, 266-79.
- Boyer, E.L. (1990). *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*. Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement for Teaching.
- Department for Education and Skills (2003). *The Future of Higher Education*. London: DfES.
- Entwistle, N. J., & Ramsden, P. (1983). *Understanding student learning*. London: Croom Helm.
- Gibbs, G., & Coffey, M. (2004). The impact of training of university teachers on their teaching skills, their approach to teaching and the approach to learning of their students. *Active Learning*, 5(1), 87-100.
- Gilbert, A., & Gibbs, G. (1998). A proposal for an international collaborative research programme to identify the impact of initial training on university teachers. *Research and Development in Higher Education*, 21, 131-143.
- Gow, L., & Kember, D. (1993). Conceptions of teaching and their relationship to student learning. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 63, 20-33.
- Institute for Teaching and Learning at the University of Sydney. Available from: <http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/USE/>
- Marsh, H., & Dunkin, M. (1997). Students' evaluations of university teaching: A multidimensional perspective. In R. P. Perry, & J. C. Smart (eds.), *Effective teaching in higher education: Research and practice* (pp. 241-320). New York: Agathon Press.
- Marton, F., & Saljo, R. (1976). On qualitative differences in learning. I - Outcome and process. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 46, 4-11.
- Murray, H. G. (1997). Effective teaching behaviours in the college classroom. In R. P. Perry, & J. C. Smart (eds.), *Effective teaching in higher education: Research and practice*. New York: Agathon Press.
- Prebble, T., Hargraves, H., Leach, L., Naidoo, K. Suddaby, G. and Zepke (2004). Impact of Student Support Services and Academic Development Programmes on Student Outcomes in Undergraduate Tertiary Study: A Synthesis of the Research. Research Report, Research Division, New Zealand Ministry of Education.
- Prosser, M., & Millar, R. (1989). The 'how' and 'what' of learning physics. *European Journal of Psychology of Education*, 4, 513-528.
- Prosser, M., & Trigwell, K. (1991). Student evaluations of teaching and courses: Student learning approaches and outcomes as criteria of validity. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 16, 293-301.
- Ramsden, P. (1992). *Learning to teach in higher education*. London: Routledge.

Ramsden, P. (1998). *Learning to lead in higher education*. London: Routledge.

The UK Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education (2006). Higher Education Academy. Available from: <http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/regandaccr/StandardsFramework>

Trigwell, K., & Prosser, M. (1991). Relating approaches to study and the quality of learning outcomes at the course level. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 61, 265-275.

Trigwell, K., & Prosser, M. (1996). Changing approaches to teaching: a relational perspective. *Studies in Higher Education*, 21.

Trigwell, K., & Prosser, M. (1997). Towards an understanding of individual acts of teaching and learning. *Higher Education Research and Development*, 16, 241-59.

Trigwell, K., & Prosser, M. (2004). Development and Use of the Approaches to Teaching Inventory. *Educational Psychology Review*, 16, 409-426

Trigwell, K., Prosser, M., & Waterhouse, F. (1999). Relations between teachers' approaches to teaching and students' approaches to learning. *Higher Education*, 37, 57-70.

Weimer, M., & Lenze, L. F. (1997). Instructional interventions: A review of the literature on efforts to improve instruction. In K. R. Perry, & J. C. Smart (eds.), *Effective teaching in higher education: Research and practice* (pp. 205-240). New York: Agathon Press.