



Success rates in HEA accredited CPD schemes May 2015–April 2016

Data collected as part of the Annual Review of
HEA accredited CPD schemes 2015-16

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Context

The HEA accredits a range of programmes which are designed to meet the development needs of staff that teach and/or support learning. In addition to accredited Postgraduate Certificate programmes (and/or modules from these), the HEA accredits continuing professional development (CPD) schemes that enable individuals to apply for HEA Fellowship on the basis of their teaching and learning experience and evidence of successful practice aligned to the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF). **This report presents data gathered from accredited institutional CPD schemes only** (i.e. data from accredited credit-bearing programmes such as Postgraduate Certificates is not included).

In accredited CPD schemes, HEA Fellowship is awarded following an internal peer review process on the basis of an individual evidencing their professional practice in a claim against one of the four UKPSF descriptors. HEA Fellowship aligns with these descriptors as follows:

- > Descriptor 1 - HEA Associate Fellowship
- > Descriptor 2 - HEA Fellowship
- > Descriptor 3 - HEA Senior Fellowship
- > Descriptor 4 - HEA Principal Fellowship

During internal review of applications for Fellowship, the criteria of the relevant descriptor are applied with three possible outcomes: applicants may be successfully awarded Fellowship at their first attempt; they may be asked to provide further evidence in a revised application or they may need to make a new application at a future point. The data provided in this report focuses on the success rates of applicants with their initial application for Fellowship (i.e. first internal review outcome) within accredited institutional CPD schemes.

The data presented within this report is self-reported by accredited CPD schemes leaders and is based on their own internal institutional records of success rates. Since 2014-15, the HEA has required all institutions with an accredited CPD scheme to complete an Annual Review (90 HEPs in 2014-15 and 109 in 2015-16); the 2015-16 Annual Review is the second round of annual reporting. As part of the Annual Review, institutions are asked to provide data about success rates. Data provided in the first 2014-15 Annual Review was found to have inaccuracies and anomalies and therefore overall data was not presented as a true analysis for 2014-15; the data for the 2015-16 reporting period (1 May 2015-30 April 2016) represents the first analysis of success data from across all institutions with accredited CPD schemes operating during that period.

We hope that institutions will find this summary analysis of the sector-wide data useful as a benchmark to support interpretation of their own institution's internal data. Comparison of success data should also support institutions to identify and consider any areas that may benefit from some further development to enhance the operation of accredited CPD schemes and/or enhance support in place for individuals engaging in these internal schemes.

Introduction

In total 109 Higher Education Providers (HEPs) with accredited experiential CPD schemes provided data for the Annual Review of Higher Education Academy (HEA) accredited CPD schemes 2015-16. Of these **103 (94.5%) HEPs provided data about success rates at first submission** made through their accredited institutional CPD schemes. The six institutions (5.5%) unable to provide data either had not held their first internal panel in the reporting period or had not received submissions through their CPD schemes within the period. Institutions were also asked to give data on second submissions; however the data provided was insufficient to enable meaningful analysis.

During the 1 May 2015-30 April 2016 reporting cycle, **13,380 HEA Fellowships** (across all four categories) were awarded in total; many of these Fellowships are awarded through taught credit-bearing programmes, such as Postgraduate Certificates in Academic Practice/Learning and Teaching in HE that are often incorporated into probationary requirements in UK institutions. **Data for these credit-bearing programmes is not included in this report** (as this does not currently form a part of the HEA Annual CPD Review process). However, if an institution has an accredited CPD framework that incorporates a variety of taught programmes and an experiential route to Fellowship then it is not possible to disaggregate the data for pathways within the framework as data will be entered by the institution under as a single record per descriptor. Therefore these holistic CPD frameworks skew the data presented for Descriptors 1 and 2 to some extent.

The number of Fellowships awarded during the reporting period does not reflect the number of applications received as some applicants will be unsuccessful at the first attempt. The HEA **received 1,032 applications** via the direct application process. Of the 1,032 applications received by the HEA, **844 applicants were successful at the first attempt** (please see Tables 1 and 2 for the breakdown at each category).

During the reporting period 1 May 2015 to 31 April 2016, **6,027 applications were made via accredited CPD schemes** across the 103 institutions returning data. Table 1 below shows the total number of applications made in institutional CPD schemes in comparison to applications made directly to the HEA. The CPD scheme data was self-reported by accredited scheme leaders and reflects institutional internal records.

Table 1: First applications received by the HEA and by accredited CPD schemes in institutions

	Number of first applications received 1 May 2015 - 30 April 2016		
	HEA direct applications	Institutional accredited CPD schemes	Total
Descriptor 1	161	1,307	1,468
Descriptor 2	445	2,769	3,214
Descriptor 3	327	1,836	2,163
Descriptor 4	99	115	214
Total	1,032	6,027	7,059

Table 1 illustrates that institutional schemes received a total of 6,027 first applications during the reporting period; 22% of these were at Descriptor 1, 46% at Descriptor 2, 30% at Descriptor 3 and 2% at Descriptor 4. In comparison, 1,032 first applications were received via the direct HEA route; 16% at Descriptor 1, 43% at Descriptor 2, 32% at Descriptor 3 and 9% at Descriptor 4. It can also be seen that although the number of first applications reviewed by the HEA was significantly less (at Descriptors 1-3) than the number reviewed through accredited institutional schemes, the proportion of applications reviewed at each descriptor is broadly similar.

The proportion of first applications received reflects the nature of each descriptor; i.e. Principal Fellowship (Descriptor 4) recognises individuals demonstrating sustained strategic impact in teaching and learning, whereas Fellowship (Descriptor 2) recognises individuals with broadly based roles in teaching and learning. As Fellowship (Descriptor 2) is regarded as a teaching qualification for the purposes of HESA data, many institutions declared specific KPIs relating to achievement at Descriptor 2 during this reporting period.

Where Table 1 set out the number of applications reviewed, Table 2 below provides the success rates of first applications (i.e. not including success rates for resubmissions) at each descriptor. To enable a comparison of success rates between this 2015-16 reporting period and success rates from the previous 2014-15 review cycle, a percentage change is indicated in brackets.

Table 2: Percentage success rates for first applications reviewed through direct application to the HEA and through institutional accredited CPD schemes

	Success rates for first applications 1 May 2015 – 30 April 2016 (% change from 1 May 2014 – 30 April 2015*)	
	HEA direct applications	Institutional accredited CPD schemes
Descriptor 1	84% (-3%)	88% (-3%*)
Descriptor 2	86% (-1%)	82% (+1%*)
Descriptor 3	77% (-3%)	72% (+1%*)
Descriptor 4	69% (-3%)	64% (-8%*)

*please note that the percentage change in success rates for institutional schemes is based on data provided in Annual Review of Accredited CPD Schemes 2014-15. Some data provided by scheme leaders was found to have inaccuracies and anomalies and therefore overall data was not presented as a true analysis in 2014-15; the data is provided here to give a broad comparison.

Overall, it can be seen from Table 2 that there has been a decrease in success rates for first applications made directly to the HEA at all four Descriptors between the 2014-15 and 2015-16 reporting cycles. It appears that success rates at Descriptors 2 and 3 in institutional schemes remain relatively unchanged and success rates at Descriptors 1 and 4 have decreased; more significantly at Descriptor 4. Overall it can be seen that there is broad similarity between the success rate of first applications submitted directly to the HEA and through institutional accredited CPD schemes at each Descriptor.

In response to consideration of the factors influencing success rates through direct application, the HEA Professional Practice team has identified common reasons for referral at first submission and is consequently taking the following actions:

- > Development of a self-diagnostic tool to support individuals to select the most appropriate category of Fellowship for their application. This new tool will become available during 2017-18;
- > Restructure of the Fellowship section of the HEA website to direct individuals to the most appropriate resources and guidance for each category of Fellowship;
- > Development of enhanced guidance to support direct applications is underway. This enhanced guidance will be launched during 2017-18 and will have an increased emphasis on the requirements of each UKPSF descriptor, as these criteria form the basis for Fellowship judgements, and applicants may tend to focus more on Dimensions of the Framework (Areas of Activity 1-5, Core Knowledge 1-6 and Professional Values).

It clear from the [Summary Report of the Annual Review of HEA Accredited CPD schemes 2015-16](#) that institutions are also introducing a range of responses to further support applicants in accredited institutional schemes in order to address the factors affecting success rates.

The following sections of this report now provide analysis of success rate data for each of the four categories of HEA Fellowship.

Descriptor 1 – HEA Associate Fellowship

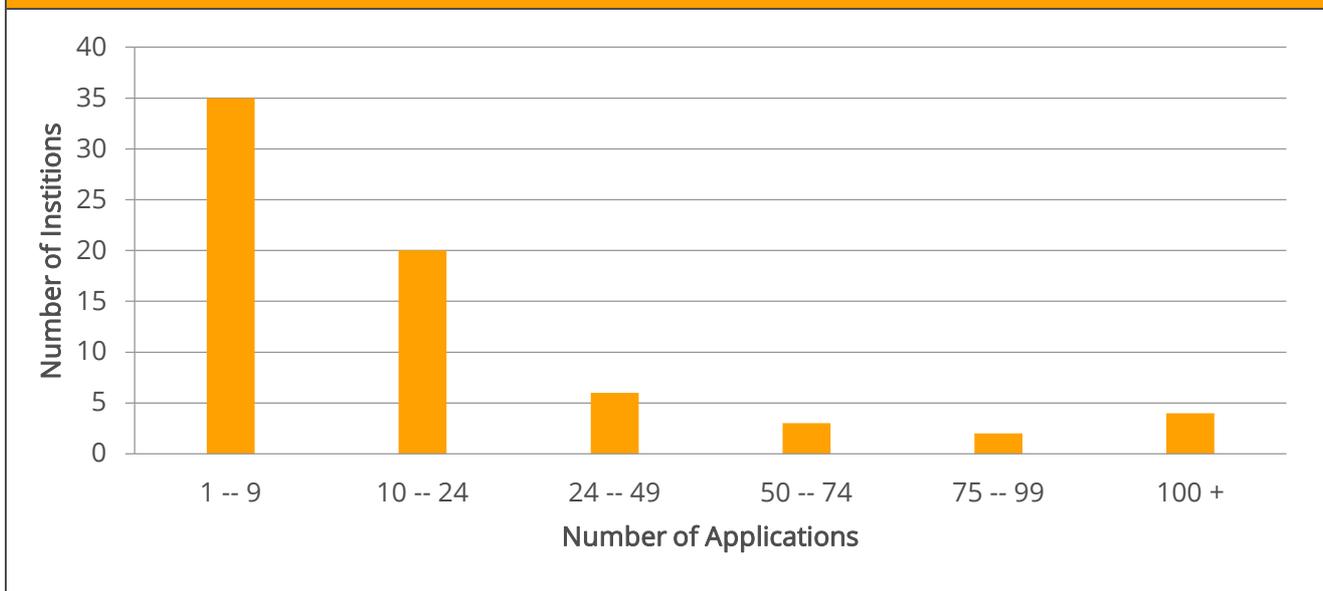
Descriptor 1 requires individuals to demonstrate an understanding of specific aspects of effective teaching, learning, support methods and student learning. Individuals are characteristically in roles that include some teaching and/or learning support responsibilities. Examples of the typical individual role or career stage may include an early career researcher with some teaching responsibilities, for example PhD students and Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTA), staff new to teaching (including those with part-time academic responsibilities), learning technologists, learning resource/library staff and staff who undertake some demonstrator/technician roles.

Out of the 109 institutions that provided institutional data in the Annual Review of HEA Accredited CPD schemes 2015-16, **70 (64%) HEPs** provided data on success rates at Descriptor 1. The other 39 institutions reporting either did not have an accredited scheme including Descriptor 1 or did not review applications at Descriptor 1 during this review period.

Application numbers at Descriptor 1 between 1 May 2015 -30 April 2016

Institutional CPD schemes received a **total of 1,307 first applications at Descriptor 1** during this review period (1 May 2015 to 30 April 2016); ranging from institutions receiving just one application to an institution with over 190 applications. The split of institutions by number of applications can be seen in Figure 1 below. Of the 70 HEPs presenting Descriptor 1 data in this review period, four (6%) had more than 100 applications and 35 institutions (50%) had less than ten applications.

Figure 1: Number of first applications at Descriptor 1 through accredited CPD schemes between 1 May 2015 - 30 April 2016



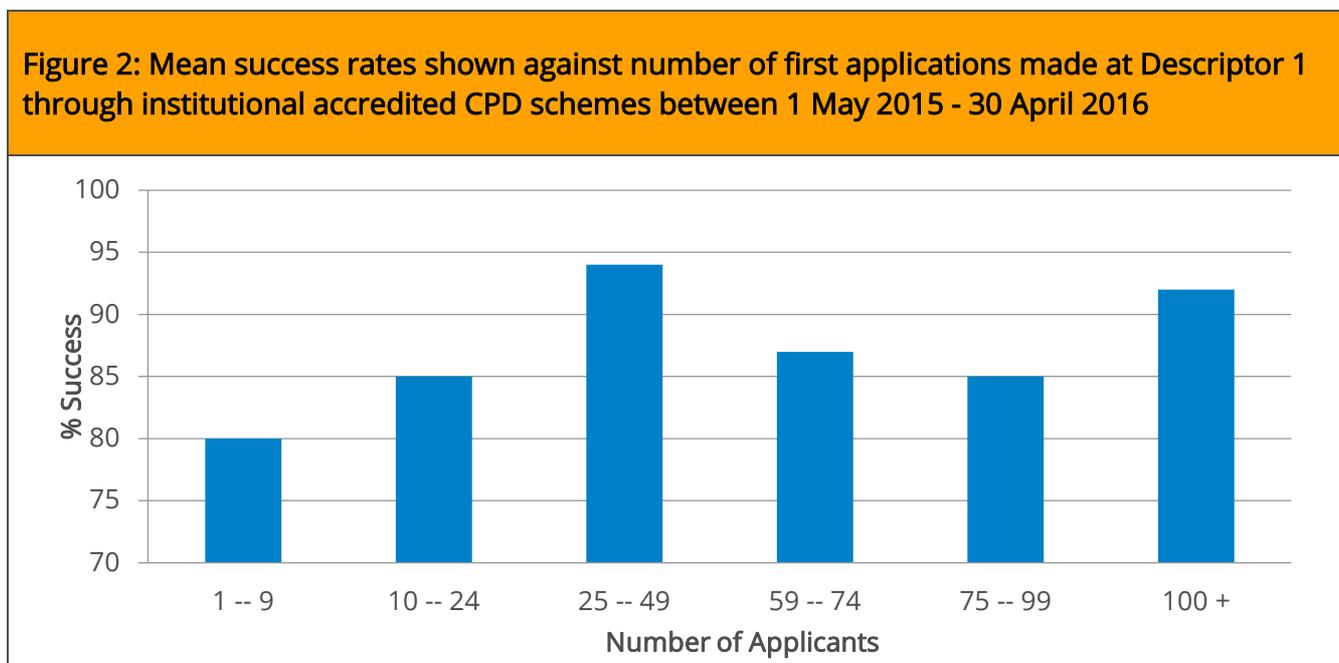
Success rates at Descriptor 1

During this review period (1 May 2015 - 30 April 2016), success rates at Descriptor 1 ranged from zero-100%, with 33 HEPs (47%) having 100% success for first applications at Descriptor 1. The breakdown of success rates reported in the Annual CPD Review 2015-16 can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3: Percentage success rates for first applications at Descriptor 1 within accredited CPD schemes (1 May 2015 - 30 April 2016)

% Success rate for first applications	Number (and percentage) of institutions reporting each % success rate at Descriptor 1
100	33 (47%)
99 - 75	23 (33%)
74 - 50	8 (11%)
49 - 25	4 (6%)
24 - 10	0 (0%)
9 - 0	2 (3%)

Figure 2 below compares % success rates at Descriptor 1 with the numbers of first applications reviewed in institutional schemes during this reporting period.



The data illustrated in Figure 2 seems to indicate that schemes receiving between 25 and 49 first time applications at Descriptor 1 have the highest success rates, with the mean being 94% for this group. Schemes with 100 or more first time applications reported a mean success rate of 92%. However, as mentioned in the introduction, several reporting institutions have taught pathways to Descriptor 1 within a holistic CPD framework. Data relating to the experiential CPD pathway cannot be disaggregated from the combined data in this model. As institutions are not required to annually report to the HEA about accredited credit-bearing programmes at present, the success rate data for these larger numbers of applicants may not present a full picture.

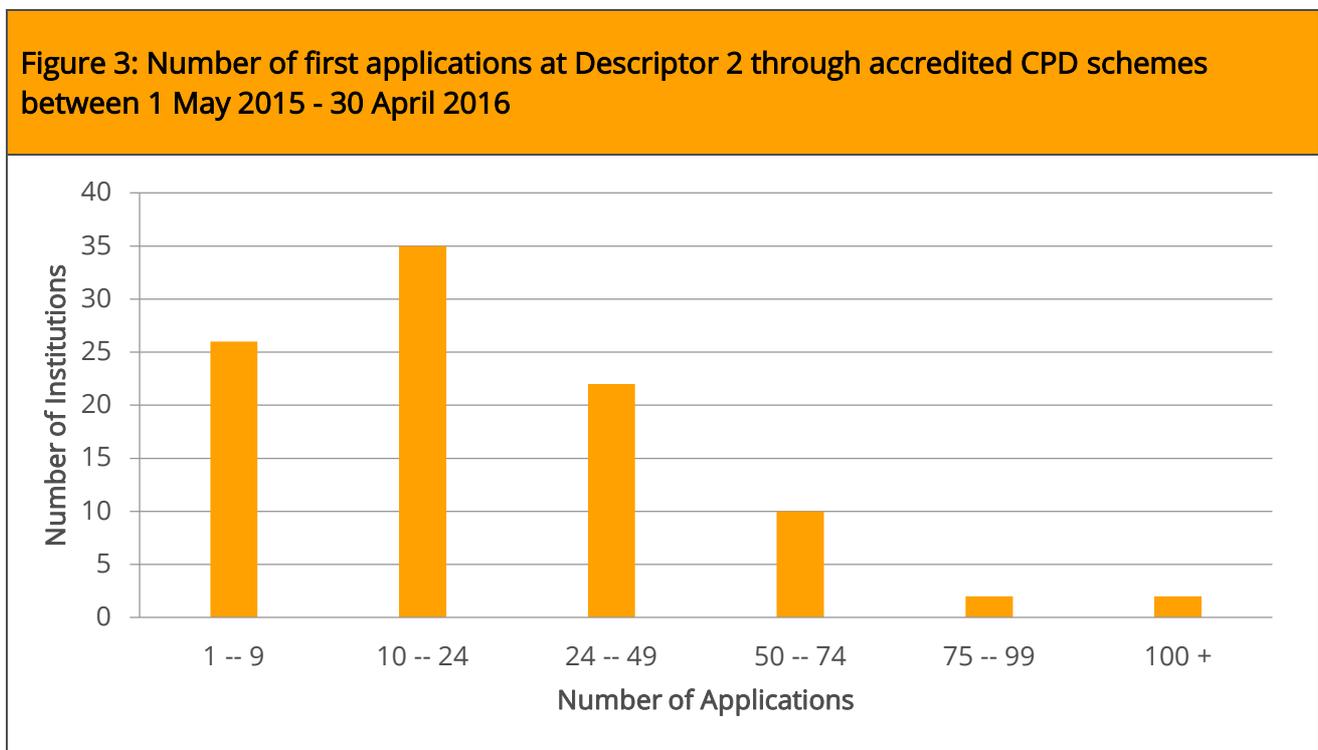
Descriptor 2 – HEA Fellowship

Descriptor 2 requires an individual to demonstrate a broad understanding of effective approaches to teaching and learning support as key contributions to high quality student learning. Successful applicants are able to provide evidence of broadly based effectiveness in more substantive teaching and learning support roles. Such individuals are likely to be early career academics, experienced academics relatively new to UK higher education or staff with (sometimes significant) teaching-only responsibilities.

Within the 109 institutions self-reporting in the Annual Review of HEA Accredited CPD Schemes 2015-16, **97 institutions (89%) provided success rate data at Descriptor 2**. Institutions received a **total of 2,769 first applications at Descriptor 2** during this review period of 1 May 2015 - 30 April 2016. Numbers of first time applications made through institutional schemes at Descriptor 2 range from institutions having two applicants to an institution with over 370 applicants. As for Descriptor 1, the large volume of applications reviewed at Descriptor 2 in some institutions is likely to reflect combined taught and experiential pathways within holistic CPD frameworks; the data presented here does not provide a complete picture.

Application numbers at Descriptor 2 between 1 May 2015 -30 April 2016

The split of institutions by number of first time applications at Descriptor 2 is shown in Figure 3 below. Of the 97 HEPs reporting Descriptor 2 data in the review period, two (2%) had more than 100 applications and twenty six institutions (27%) had less than ten applications.



Success rates at Descriptor 2

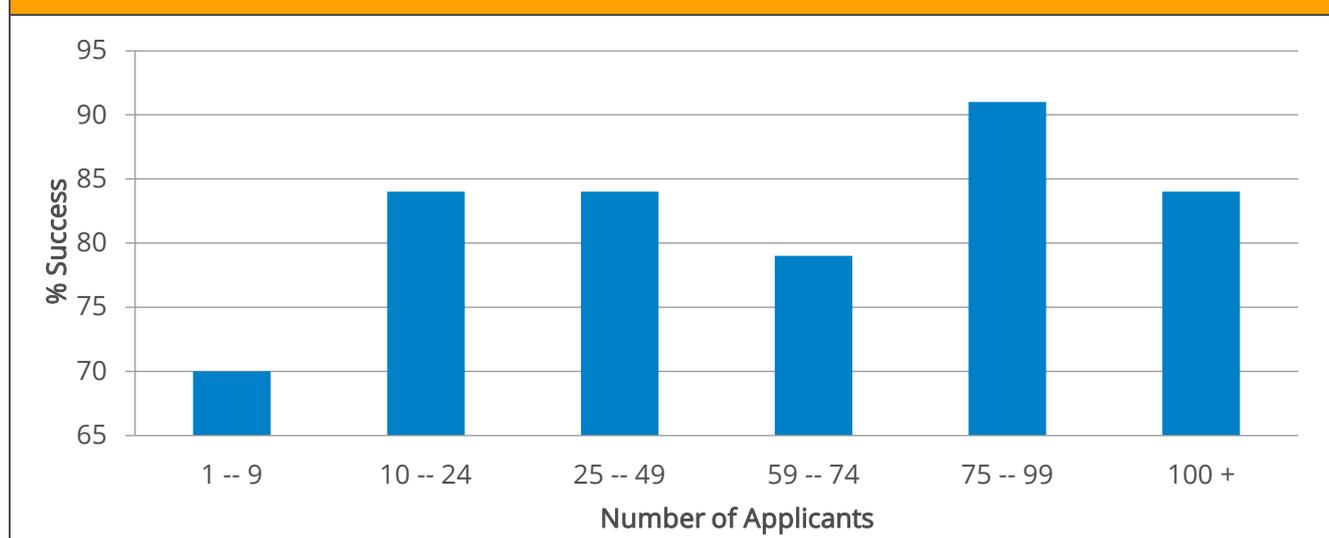
The data indicates that first applications through accredited CPD schemes at Descriptor 2 have high success rates, with 67 HEPs (69%) recording success rates of 75% or over. It also appears that a high proportion (63%) of schemes received less than 25 applications during the reporting period. This is not unexpected that the number of applications at Descriptor 2 in institutional schemes is fairly low, as although the number of Fellows (Descriptor 2) is by far the largest of all categories, the majority of Fellowships at Descriptor 2 in UK institutions are awarded to relatively new academic staff through credit-bearing taught programmes; whereas experienced staff applying at Descriptor 2 are more likely to internally apply through an accredited institutional CPD scheme or externally through direct application to the HEA. Table 4 below outlines the success rates for first applications made at Descriptor 2 in accredited CPD schemes.

Table 4: Percentage Success Rates for Descriptor 2 within Accredited CPD Schemes (May 2015 – April 2016)

% Success	Number (and percentage) of institutions reporting each % success rate at first attempt at Descriptor 2
100	16 (16%)
99 - 75	51 (53%)
74 - 50	24 (25%)
49 - 25	5 (5%)
24 - 10	0 (0%)
9 - 0	1 (1%)

Figure 4 below compares % success rates at Descriptor 2 with the numbers of first applications reviewed in institutional schemes during this reporting period

Figure 4: Mean success rates shown against number of first applications made at Descriptor 2 through institutional accredited CPD schemes between 1 May 2015 - 30 April 2016



It can be seen from the data that schemes with between 75 and 99 applicants have the highest success rates with the mean figure being 91%. The table also shows below mean success rates (82%) in provision with one to nine applicants per year. The high success rates in provision with many applicants is reflective of the high number of applicants on this provision being from holistic schemes which means although these participants may have been on a taught route, the data is included in this report.

It is also interesting to note that although many UK HEPs are now setting KPIs around high levels of Fellowship (likely to focus on Descriptor 2), as 63% of schemes received less than 25 applications in this reporting period, this appears not to be reflected in these figures at this point.

Descriptor 3 – HEA Senior Fellowship

Descriptor 3 requires individuals to evidence a thorough understanding of effective approaches to teaching and learning support as key contributions to high quality student learning. Such individuals are likely to lead, or be members of, established academic teams and are able to provide evidence of a sustained record of effectiveness in relation to teaching and supporting learning. They are experienced staff able to demonstrate impact and influence through leading and managing programmes, subjects and/or disciplinary areas; they may be subject mentors and staff who support those new to teaching or they may have departmental and/or wider teaching and learning support advisory responsibilities within an institution.

Of the 109 institutions self-reporting in the Annual Review of HEA accredited CPD schemes 2015-16, **89 (75%) HEPs** provided success rate data at Descriptor 3. The remaining 20 institutions did not have accreditation at Descriptor 3 or had not reviewed any applications within the reporting period.

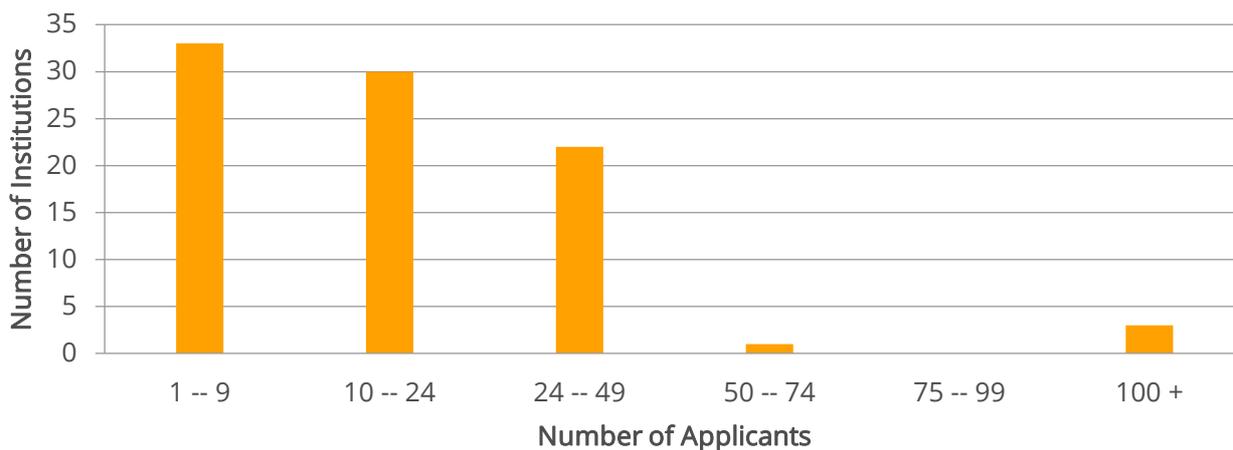
Application numbers at Descriptor 3 between 1 May 2015 - 30 April 2016

Institutional CPD schemes received a **total of 1,836 applications at Descriptor 3** during the review period of 1 May 2015 - 30 April 2016; ranging from institutions having one applicant to one institution with 140 applicants.

Of the 89 HEPs presenting Descriptor 3 data in the review period, 3 (3%) had more than 100 applications, 3 (3%) had less than ten applications and 77 institutions (88%) received between 50 and 99 applications.

The split of institutions by number of applications at Descriptor 3 can be seen in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5: Number of first applications at Descriptor 3 through accredited CPD schemes 1 May 2015 - 30 April 2016



The [Summary report of the Annual Review of HEA accredited CPD Schemes](#) identifies the increasing role of Fellowship in promotions boards (section 4.3, page 67) and increasing numbers of applications for Senior Fellowship especially may reflect the increasing emphasis on Fellowship for career development and promotion. The HEA team have noted that the common reason for a first

attempt to be unsuccessful is the requirement for individuals to provide sufficient evidence of their successful influence on the teaching and learning practices of their colleagues (addressing Descriptor 3.VII) and this might perhaps reflect that some individuals seeking promotion may wish to achieve Senior Fellowship at an early stage in their career.

Success Rates at Descriptor 3

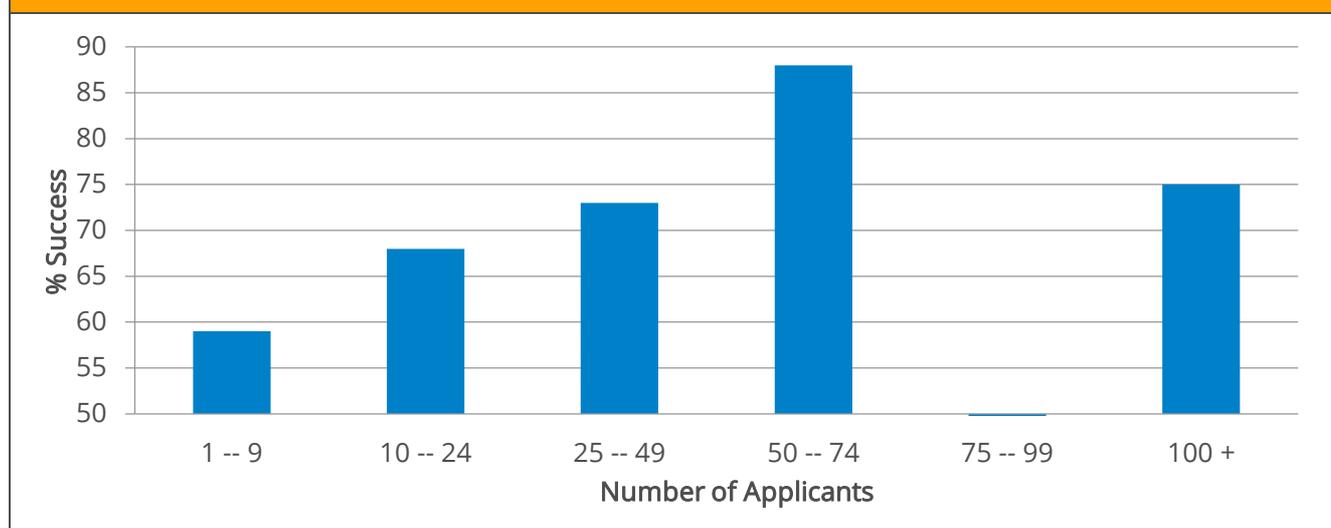
During the review period (1 May 2015 - 30 April 2016) success rates at Descriptor 3 ranged from zero to 100%, with 39 HEPs (44%) recording success rates of 75% or over at first application. The split of success rates reported in the Annual Review of Accredited CDP Schemes (2015-16) can be seen in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Percentage success rates for Descriptor 3 within accredited CPD schemes (May 2015 – April 2016)

% Success	Number (and percentage) of institutions reporting each % success rate at first attempt at Descriptor 3
100	6 (7%)
99 - 75	33 (37%)
74 - 50	35 (39%)
49 - 25	9 (10%)
24 - 10	3 (3%)
9 - 0	3 (3%)

Figure 6 below compares % success rates at Descriptor 3 with the number of first applications reviewed in institutional schemes during the review period.

Figure 6: Mean success rates shown against number of first applications made at Descriptor 3 through institutional accredited CPD schemes between 1 May 2015-30 April 2016



The data illustrated in Figure 6 indicates that schemes receiving between 50-74 first time applications have the highest mean success rate at 88%, with the mean being 72% at Descriptor 3. This can be further compared to the HEA Direct applications that have a success rate of 77% at Descriptor 3. As Descriptor 3 becomes increasingly important for promotion within the sector it can be expected that application numbers will increase across all provision therefore developing the initial advice and guidance and on-going support mechanisms may become a focus of institutional schemes. The HEA is also in the process of developing resources to help potential applicants to decide at an early point in the application process whether Descriptor 3 is appropriate to their practice and experience and to provide enhanced guidance.

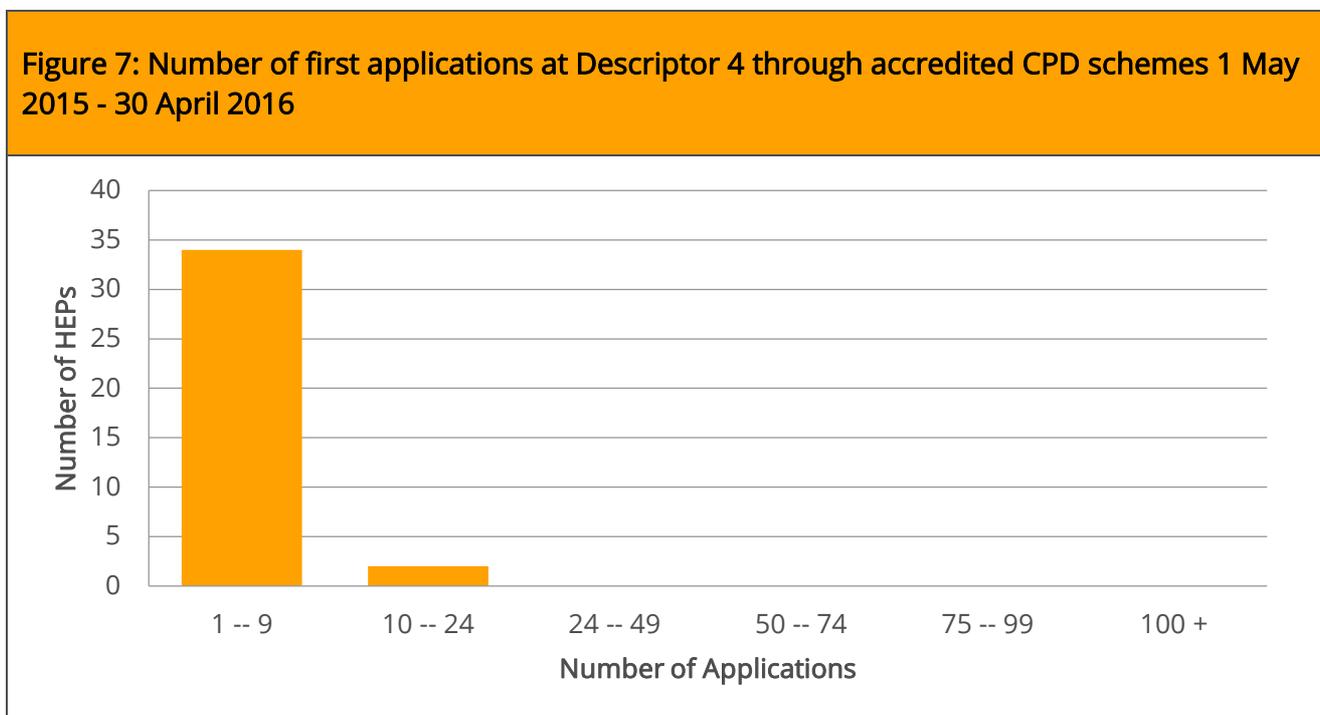
Descriptor 4 – HEA Principal Fellowship

Descriptor 4 requires individuals to demonstrate their sustained record of effective strategic leadership in academic practice and academic development as a key contribution to high quality student learning. Such individuals should be able to provide evidence of a sustained and effective record of impact at a strategic level in relation to teaching and learning as part of a wider commitment to academic practice and may typically be a highly experienced and/or senior member of staff with wide-ranging academic or academic-related strategic leadership responsibilities in connection with key aspects of teaching and supporting learning. Similarly such individuals may be staff that are responsible for institutional strategic leadership and policy-making in the areas of teaching and learning or staff that have strategic impact and influence in relation to teaching and learning that extends beyond their own institution.

In total the 109 institutions self-reporting in the Annual Review of HEA accredited CPD schemes 2015-16, of these **36 HEPs (33%)** provided data on success rates. The remaining 73 institutions either did not have accreditation at Descriptor 4 or may not have reviewed any Descriptor 4 applications within the reporting period. Due to the challenging nature of Descriptor 4, some institutions previously accredited to award Principal Fellowship have not continued with this at reaccreditation. In these instances institutions have decided to focus on support for direct applications to the HEA.

Application numbers at Descriptor 4 between 1 May 2015 - 30 April 2016

Institutional schemes received a **total of 115 first applications at Descriptor 4** during this review period (1 May 2015 - 30 April 2016); this ranges from institutions having one applicant to an institution with ten applicants. The split of institutions by number of applications can be seen in Figure 7.



Of the 36 HEPs with Descriptor 4 data in the review period, two institutions (6%) had more than 10 applications and 34 institutions (96%) had less than ten applications. This further demonstrates the

specific strategic experience required to be a Principal Fellow. Although the HEA is processing around one sixth of the applications of the combined HEPs, within the Descriptor 4 category the numbers awarded via the two options are very similar. This could be due to a number of factors including the reducing number of accredited institutions with Descriptor 4 programmes and the costs involved for HEPs sourcing external reviewers may mean that the HEA direct application route could be more financially viable for some institutions.

Success Rates at Descriptor 4

First applications at Descriptor 4 demonstrate the lowest success rates overall, with a mean of 64%; indicating some challenging conversations and difficulties for those mentoring. This figure indicates roughly an 8% decrease in success rate from the previous year.

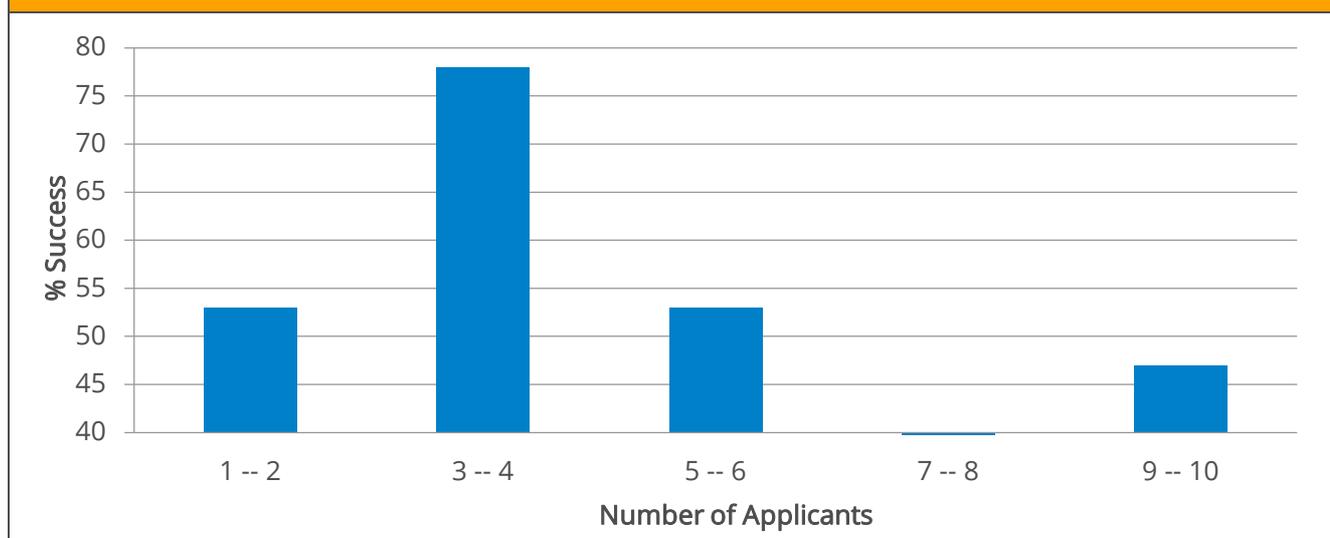
During the review period (1 May 2015 – 30 April 2016) success rates at Descriptor 4 ranged from zero to 100%, with a mean of 64% but within this 41% of all applications are within a scheme which has 100% success. The split of success rates reported in the Annual Review of Accredited CPD Schemes (2015-16) can be seen in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Percentage Success Rates for Descriptor 4 within Accredited CPD Schemes (May 2015 – April 2016)

% Success	Number (and percentage) of institutions reporting each % success rate at first attempt at Descriptor 4
100	15 (41%)
99 - 75	1 (3%)
74 - 50	9 (25%)
49 - 25	2 (6%)
24 - 10	2 (6%)
9 - 0	7 (19%)

Figure 8 below indicates the mean success rates for first applications made at Descriptor 4 through institutional accredited CPD schemes during this reporting period. (Please note that due to the small numbers of applications made at Descriptor 4 in institutional schemes, the x axis on the bar chart is at a different scale to previous figures).

Figure 8: Mean success rates shown against number of first applications made at Descriptor 4 through institutional accredited CPD schemes between 1 May 2015 - 30 April 2016



The data illustrated in Figure 8 seems to indicate that schemes receiving between three to four applications are the most successful with a mean success rate of 78% compared to the mean of 64% for all applicants to institutional schemes. The mean success rate of 64% reflected an 8% decrease overall in first application success rates from the previous 12 month period. In comparison, first applications made to the HEA during this reporting period had a 69% success rate, which demonstrated a 3% decrease on the previous 12 month period. The HEA success rate is based on review of 99 applications during this period and the decrease in mean success rate across institutional schemes may also reflect difficulties in ensuring consistent and appropriate decision-making if very few applications at Descriptor 4 are seen annually.

Summary

As this is the first time that sector-wide data has been available for sharing, it is hoped that institutions will be able to use this report to benchmark their own internal data and consider any further developments that may support increased success rates. From the data, it can be seen that overall the first application success rate is broadly similar between HEA direct applications and review within institutional accredited CPD schemes.

The [Summary report of the Annual Review of HEA accredited CPD Schemes](#) identifies a number of factors that impact on success rates in accredited CPD schemes such as the following:

- > Diagnostic or pre-submission checklists;
- > Transparent documentation and use of self-mapping documents or templates linked to descriptors;
- > VLE resources and good practice examples;
- > workshops and writing retreats to support mid process activity;
- > mentors as an increasingly important resource;
- > trained confident assessors;
- > clear feedback to support successful first time and also second time applications
- > clear guidance informing future professional development and maintenance of good standing;
- > establishment and growth of communities of practice for fellows.

Although this first analysis of data is a useful resource, following discussion and consultation with accredited CPD scheme leaders, it has been decided to change the reporting period for 2016-17, consequently the entire Annual CPD Review process will move to mirror the UK academic year. The next **Annual CPD Review 2016-17 will be issued in September 2017 for a return in December 2017.**

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