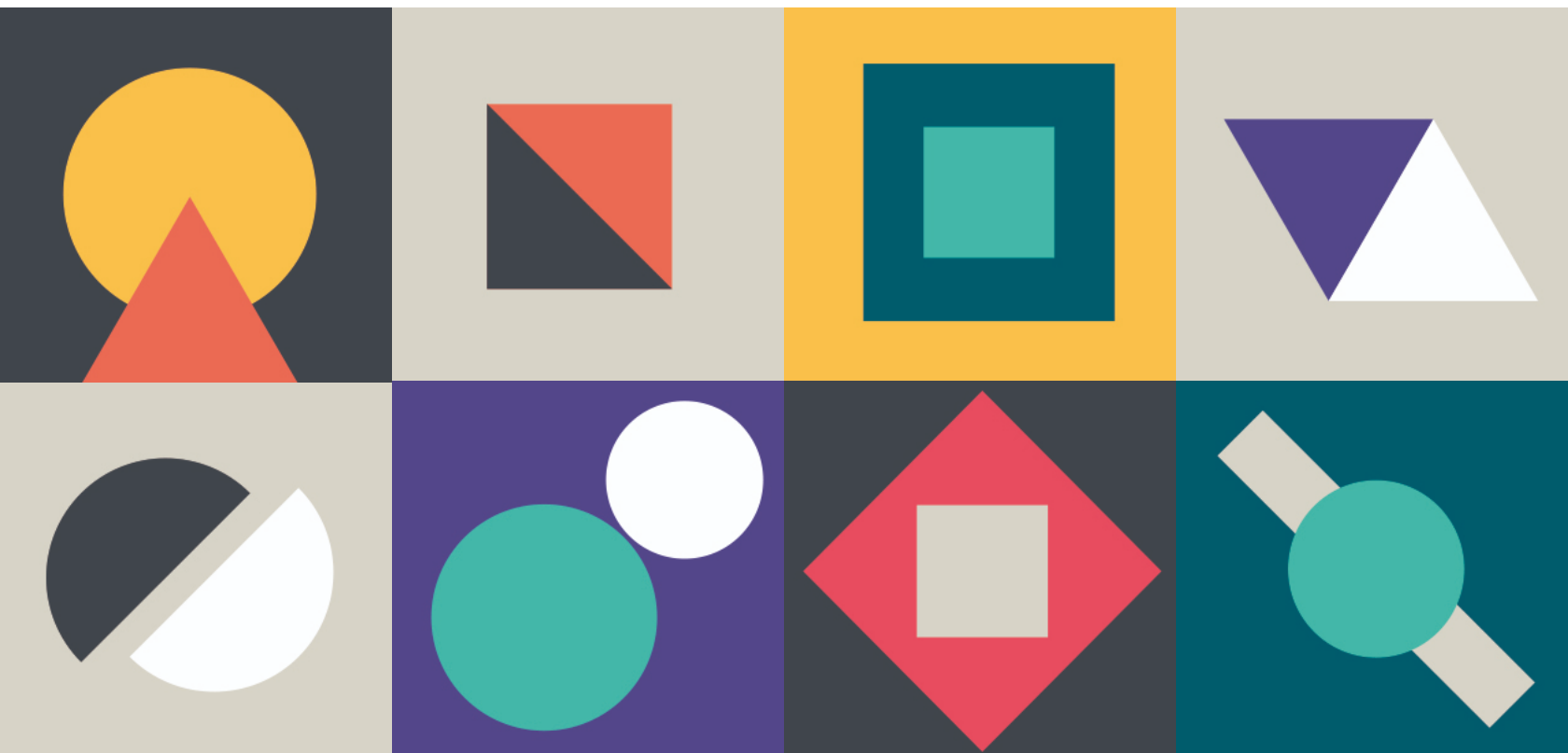


In Partnership



Keeping our members updated
with the latest from Advance HE



Contents

- A new way to connect and collaborate
- NTFS and CATE open for applications
- The PVC Network: sharing good practice in teaching and learning
- Returning to leadership a different person
- The hard facts of soft skills
- Update on EPA for the Academic Professional Apprenticeship
- The Degree Standards project
- Research Insight: Race Equality Evaluation
- Bringing together colleagues in HE: The Spinnaker Group
- Support inclusion for those who stammer in university
- Fellowship support services: Bulk applications offer until 29 March 2019
- Dates for your diary

Welcome to the January 2019 edition of **In Partnership**

In the first edition of In Partnership for this new year, we would like to highlight a range of our latest publications including our sixth Research Insight and a reflection on using UKES as a tool for benchmarking student skills development internationally. We also provide updates on the PVC Network, The Degree Standards project and Fellowship support services.

Please note that access to certain reports is restricted and dependent on your Advance HE membership arrangements. Please contact memberships@advance-he.ac.uk with queries. As always, we welcome your feedback and suggestions for future editions.



A new way to connect and collaborate



Following a three month period of lively consultation with institutions and Fellows across the UK and internationally, we're pleased to announce that in spring this year we will be launching a new way for staff in HE to connect and collaborate as they seek to enhance practice in HE. The new Advance HE networks will enable academics to form communities, particularly around their subject area whether that be an academic discipline or an area of professional practice such as learning and development or equality.

A new online platform is being developed that will be free to staff employed within Advance HE member institutions and will further enhance the work that Advance HE does in facilitating sector-led collaboration, not only in the area of teaching and learning but across our key topics within equality and diversity, leadership and management and governance.

As a core benefit of Advance HE membership, this new development will enable the further enhancement of the extensive networks that Advance HE already provides for our members and partners across the globe.

Our recent consultation revealed a high level of support for Advance HE to use its convening power to bring together staff from our 350 member institutions across the world who share an interest in teaching and learning, equality and leadership in their disciplines to enable them to share information, communicate, ask questions, problem solve and collaborate. These integrated global subject networks will

provide a unique opportunity to consider a broad range of issues through a discipline lens.

We're really excited to be able to coordinate and facilitate sector-wide networks and to provide the infrastructure necessary to foster collaboration across the sector. We're looking forward to empowering groups of experts to provide solutions to challenges faced by the sector and support a model of 'user-generated content' and resources as a result.

Over this next month we'll be sharing more information about our plans that are being developed. The platform will launch late March/early April for the first subject networks and further networks will be added as the platform develops.

If you or your organisation would like to get involved with this innovative development please get in touch by emailing us at: networks@advance-he.ac.uk

NTFS and CATE open for applications

Advance HE has officially opened the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS) 2019 and the Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence (CATE) for nominations.

NTFS

The National Teaching Fellowship (NTF) Scheme celebrates and recognises individuals who have made an outstanding impact on student outcomes and the teaching profession in higher education. The award has been running since 2000 and there are now over 860 National Teaching Fellows, with up to 55 individuals receiving the award each year. Institutions may nominate up to three individuals per annum.



CATE

The Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence (CATE) was introduced in 2016 and recognises and rewards collaborative work that has had a demonstrable impact on teaching and learning, highlighting the key role of teamwork in higher education.



Since last year, both schemes have been open to members of staff from all providers of higher education across the four nations of the UK. All awardees play an ongoing role in enhancing teaching and learning within their institution, the HE sector and further afield.

Kathryn Harrison-Graves, Advance HE Director of Membership and Accreditation, said:

“Advance HE is very proud to lead on these awards. Both NTFS and CATE have a really important role in recognising outstanding teaching by individuals and teams. They also provide superb examples of great practice for others in the sector. I’m sure the 2019 entries will be as inspirational as the ones we have seen in previous years.”

Nominations for NTFS closes Wednesday 3 April 2019 at 15:00 (BST), and nominations for CATE close Wednesday 27 March 2019 at 15:00 (GMT). Further information about the awards and how to enter can be found [here](#).

The PVC Network: Sharing good practice in learning and teaching



Twice a year the 'PVC Network' brings together Deputy- and Pro-Vice-Chancellors and Vice- and Deputy Principals with responsibility for teaching and learning across UK HE to discuss common problems and to share good practice.

Advance HE is very pleased to invite Deputy Vice-Chancellors, Pro-Vice-Chancellors and Vice-Principals with responsibility for teaching and learning to the next 'PVC Network' meeting on 15-16 May 2019 to be held at the Council House, Birmingham.

The programme is almost complete, fashioned in response to feedback from participants at the highly successful event at the Barbican Centre, London in November 2018. Highlights of the May 2019 programme include:

- Baroness Valerie Amos, Vice-Chancellor, SOAS University of London, who is leading the Universities UK (UUK) and the NUS initiative to improve the performance and university experience of black and minority ethnic (BME) students across the UK, talking about 'postgraduate attainment';
- A highly topical, workshop session led by Nicola Turner, Head of Sector Practice at the Office for Students on 'devising your institutional 5-year access and participation strategy';
- A session on digital learning from an institutional and student perspective drawing on recent JISC research.

In addition, there will be ample opportunity to network with familiar faces and new colleagues facing similar challenges.

If you or a colleague would like to attend the May 2019 Network you can [register for the event here.](#)

Returning to leadership a different person

Now is exactly the right time to learn from the best of the HE network, from other sectors, and from other countries. Robin Ryde, Co-Director of the Top Management Programme (TMP), shares his insights about the value of joining the TMP in May 2019.

It is getting difficult these days to count on one hand the number of major shifts that are currently occurring in the higher education (HE) universe. Looking to different regions of this universe we might think about technological developments shaping movements in artificial intelligence, big data, and all things digital, or we might focus on global economic trends and what has been referred to as the rise of the Asian century. Domestically, the constellation of changes having an effect range from rising student expectations to a shifting regulatory environment to domestic competition, and everything in between.

Amid this swirling snowstorm of change, at times bizarre and unfathomable, we might feel alone and struggle to know what to do next. But the truth of it is that we are anything but alone. Institutions across the UK are grappling with the very same challenges, as are HE institutions overseas, and organisations from outside the sector. It is for this very reason that Advance HE's Top Management Programme (TMP) operates in the way it does – by constructing a bridge between UK institutions to facilitate learning – and also by visiting other territories to see what works there. This principle of learning is based on the simple idea that insights can come from examples near and far but importantly, we do need to go looking for them.

In May 2019, senior HE leaders will commence the 44th Top Management Programme which, amongst other things, will incorporate visits to UK Universities that are innovating in particular realms and this year will include an international assignment to Sydney, Australia. On the global stage Australia is making waves in a number of areas. For example, over the last decade the number of students from lower socio-economic backgrounds entering Australian Universities has increased by 50%. Meanwhile Australia overtook the UK last year as the world's second biggest destination for international students. These two statistics



alone offer illustrations where the Australian HE system is finding success, and as we all know achievements like these aren't easily won. The potential for learning and sharing ideas between institutions like this and the many Universities that TMP senior participants represent, is enormous.

[Read the full blog here](#)

Advance HE's Top Management Programme has an established track record in developing strategic leaders in higher education.

There are a few places remaining on our [Top Management Programme cohort 44](#). Alternatively, cohort 45 starts later in the year on 4 October. Please contact TMP@advance-he.ac.uk for more information.

The Hard Facts of Soft Skills

With the debate on workplace skills, and the role of universities in helping students to develop skills – particularly ‘soft skills’ – firmly in the spotlight, the time is right to consider the role of the UK Engagement Survey (UKES) as a tool for benchmarking student skills development and examining how the UK compares internationally. Because student engagement surveys run in a number of other countries and because they largely use the same questions, this makes an international comparison possible.

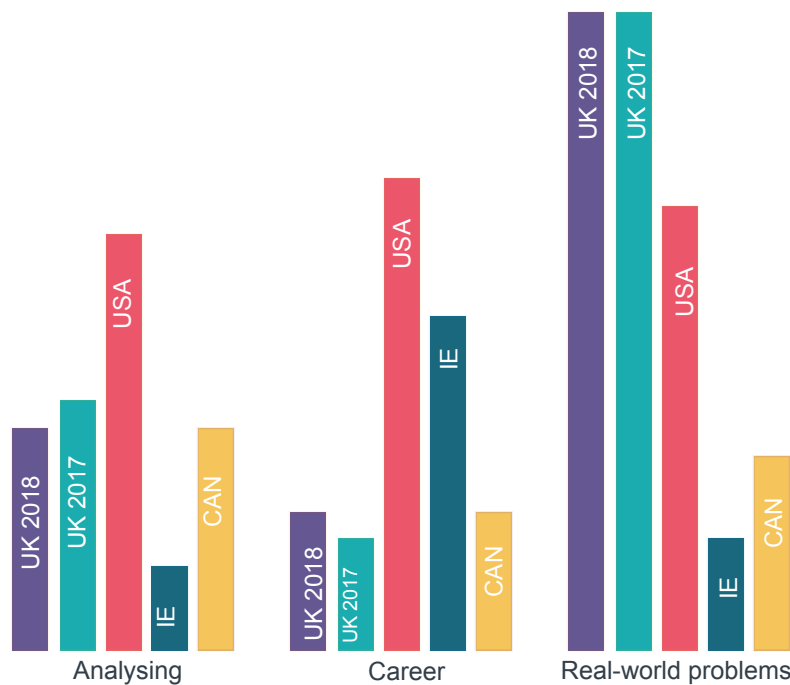
Earlier this month, the Confederation of British Industry published its annual education and skills report, providing a detailed analysis of the perceptions of some 28,000 employers, of the UK education system. With the vast majority either maintaining or increasing levels of graduate recruitment year-on-year, it was asserted that businesses clearly valued UK higher education.

These findings chime with those in the ‘Global Skills Gap in the 21st Century’ report published in October by QS in association with the Institute of Student Employers. Examining the relationship between the expectations of employers worldwide and the skills of graduates, the report found that, ‘across the globe, problem-solving, the ability to work in a team, and communication, are considered to be the most important skills. (QS, 2018). The good news is that the skills sought by UK employers are seemingly well aligned with what universities provide.

Nevertheless, both the QS and CBI reports as well as the UK Government in its ‘Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain fit for the future’ (November 2017), suggest that there is room for improvement so that our graduates can continue to thrive in the world of work, developing the right attitudes, technical and subject-specific skills as well as so-called ‘soft skills’. As we usher in the ‘4th Industrial Revolution’ and prepare for the UK’s

imminent departure from the European Union, the focus on skills development in the workplace, and in particular the demand for soft (or transferable) skills such as those highlighted in the QS report, has perhaps never been higher.

Comparing UG student engagement in the UK, US, Ireland and Canada: career development



Beyond the technical and subject-specific skills acquired during the course of a degree, what soft skills can students bring to the table? Are they the right ones from an employer’s perspective and how do different HE systems compare in this respect? The UK Engagement Survey (UKES), offering rich insights into how undergraduate students engage with their studies, how they spend their time, and how they develop their skills accordingly, provides many of the answers.

[Read the full blog here](#)

The call for papers for the 2019 Surveys and Insights Conference is now open. For more information on UKES and Advance HE’s full portfolio of surveys, please contact surveys@advance-he.ac.uk

Update on EPA for the Academic Professional Apprenticeship

We are pleased to announce that this week, we received confirmation that our application to become a registered provider of End Point Assessment for the Academic Professional Apprenticeship has been successful.

This is an important milestone in the development of a suitable offer for institutions in England many of whom are already engaging with the Academic Professional Apprenticeship. Naturally, we are delighted but now begins the hard work of designing, commissioning and putting in place the service. In a bid to ensure it is informed by the different approaches being used across the sector for delivery of the APA, we will be convening a further workshop of interested institutions shortly.

We will of course be contacting those we have been engaged with throughout the process of development to date, however, should you wish to register your interest in attending and/or wish to discuss your EPA requirements as a current or prospective provider then please contact:

- John Rose-Adams john.rose-adams@advance-he.ac.uk;
- Nick Skeet nick.skeet@advance-he.ac.uk; or
- your Advance HE Head of Membership.

The Degree Standards project: 1,200 external examiners trained so far

Increasing numbers of degree students gaining first and upper second class degrees has been the subject of much discussion about putative grade inflation over the past few years.

Ensuring that degrees do not lose their value over time is now a condition of continued registration with the Office for Students (OfS) for higher education providers in England and the TEF now requires institutions to address grade inflation data. In addition, the UK standing Committee on Quality Assessment is currently consulting on a sector statement about how to protect the value of the honours degree qualifications over time. Strengthened external examining is one way of ensuring against the erosion of academic standards.

The Degree Standards project

The Degree Standards project, led by Advance HE, and managed by the Office for Students on behalf of the English, Welsh and Northern Ireland administrations, has developed professional development packages for external examiners.

Firstly, a Professional Development Course (PDC) for external examiners has been successfully developed with eight higher education institutions and adopted by a further 17 others with a view to training their own staff as external examiners on an ongoing basis. A Develop the Developer programme has been designed to facilitate this. An online version of the course has also been successfully piloted.

Secondly, activities designed to calibrate academic standards at subject level have been devised with professional bodies such as the Royal Geographical Society and the Royal Society of Chemistry. In addition, eleven institutions are involved in a North-West Consortium offering courses which integrate both professional development and calibration exercises. Over 1,200 academic staff have been trained so far.

[Read more about the project](#)

If you are interested in joining the project, which is currently free, please contact: External.Examining@advance-he.ac.uk

New Research Insight: Evaluating the ‘Achieving Race Equality in Higher Education’ programme

Advance HE’s sixth Research Insight provides equality and diversity practitioners with a useful example of how to evaluate the impact of a programme or intervention, by employing a repeated-measures design.

The Research Insight was written by Dr Amanda Aldercotte, Head of Knowledge and Research at Advance HE. It evaluates whether the ‘Achieving Race Equality in Higher Education’ programme is effective in improving participants’ familiarity with terms related to race equality and their confidence in engaging with race equality.

The study found that: “On average, the participants who completed the two rounds of the survey showed significant improvements in a number of important areas, including their familiarity with terms related to race equality and their confidence in engaging with race equality.”

The programme was also linked to significant improvements in participants’ confidence in engaging with race equality, particularly with regard to taking action and moving forward. For example, participants knew what concrete steps to take to facilitate race equality in their institution, and were able to name several successful approaches to achieving race equality. Together, these improvements suggest that the programme helped make participants more able and better prepared to engage in race equality within their institution while highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of applying a repeated-measures design to equality interventions of this type.

Research Insight

Evaluating the ‘Achieving Race Equality in Higher Education’ programme

Dr Amanda Aldercotte, Head of Knowledge and Research

Abstract

Advance HE’s sixth Research Insight evaluates whether their ‘Achieving Race Equality in Higher Education’ programme is effective in improving participants’ familiarity with terms related to race equality and their confidence in engaging with race equality.

Introduction

This Research Insight provides equality and diversity practitioners with a useful example of how to evaluate the impact of a programme or intervention, by employing a repeated-measures design. As an example, it evaluates whether attending a race equality training programme (delivered by Advance HE) improved participants’ confidence in engaging with race equality and their familiarity with race equality terminology and concepts. For additional information on methods, see our [Research and Data Briefing on impact evaluation](#).

Participants consisted of staff from higher education institutions (HEIs) who attended the 2-day programme in April 2017, October 2017, March 2018 and June 2018.

The course was delivered by Advance HE’s training and learning team and aimed to:

- Increase participants’ confidence in engaging with race equality.
- Increase participants’ competence in engaging with race equality.
- Increase participants’ understanding of racial inequalities.
- Enable participants to advance race equality within their institution.

The programme included two full-day sessions and used a variety of methods including self-reflection, independent reading, participative exercises, presentations, videos and quizzes.

Method

To investigate whether attending an introductory course to race equality improved participants’ confidence and competence in engaging with race equality, the current Research Insight employed a pre- and post-intervention design (also referred to as a repeated-measures design, see our [Research and Data Briefing on impact evaluation](#) for an overview of this method). For this evaluation, we created a pre- and post-programme questionnaire for participants.

The pre-programme questionnaire (time 1, or T1) focused on participants’ reasons for attending, course expectations, knowledge of race equality terminology, and confidence and competence in engaging with race equality. The post-programme questionnaire (time 2, or T2) surveyed participants’ knowledge of race equality terminology, confidence and competence in engaging with race equality and course satisfaction.

This briefing focusses specifically on items of the questionnaires related to the programme’s effectiveness. These included ten items on participants’ familiarity with race equality terminology and concepts, such as critical race theory or institutional racism. For each of these items, participants were asked to rate their familiarity from 1 (*I have never heard of this concept before*) to 5 (*I am fully familiar with this concept and can give several relevant examples*). An additional ten items were used to assess participants’ confidence in engaging with race equality (eg *I am confident discussing race equality with people from the same ethnic group as me*, or *I know who to engage to facilitate race equality in my institution*). Each item asked participants to rate their confidence from 1 (*Not at all confident*) to 5 (*Extremely confident*).

Both the T1 and T2 questionnaires were administered via the SurveyMonkey platform. Out of the 69 members of staff that attended the

Download the Research Insight: Evaluating the “Achieving Race Equality in Higher Education” programme.

We have had a fantastic response to our calls for involvement in the Engineering Schools’ Collaborative Project and the Embedding Inclusivity in the Curriculum Collaborative Project – both programmes are now full, however we are pleased to announce we will be running a second cohort of the Embedding Inclusivity project, starting in autumn. If you are interested in getting involved in this second programme please do get in touch via your Head of Membership.

Bringing together colleagues in Higher Education: The Spinnaker Group



Harriet Dunbar-Morris – founder of the Spinnaker Group – explains the aims of the group, the structure of its meetings and its overall value, in this introductory blog.

The Spinnaker Group brings together colleagues who lead on 'Student Experience' and 'Teaching and Learning' in institutions across the Higher Education sector. Around twice or three times a year, members congregate for an evening and the following day at a volunteer member's institution.

The aim of these meetings is primarily to network, but also to discuss ideas, outlook, and, most importantly, best practice. At each meeting we focus on a theme, sharing our institutional research and understanding on an important issue in the sector. The format allows connections to be created that might not otherwise happen due to the hierarchical and often mission-group nature of collaborations in the sector. We have recently considered BME Success and Assessment & Feedback. Our forthcoming meetings will focus on Student Support and Academic/Personal Tutoring (in February 2019) and Mental Health (later in 2019).

Founder of the group Dr Harriet Dunbar-Morris says: *"For me the value of the group is that it allows people to come together to unpick a topic of shared interest in a non-competitive way, we can learn from each other's experiences whatever our type of institution and create different connections across the sector."*

Michael Parker, Head of Membership & Networks at Advance HE, recently attended the group meeting in Edinburgh and added: *"The Spinnaker Group is a fantastic example of the many thriving communities and networks that exist across the sector that work to enhance the practice and experience of practitioners in HE. I was very pleased to be involved in the session on assessment and feedback, providing the opportunity for the group and Advance HE to work together on common goals. I look forward to working with the group further on future collaborations."*

The group currently comprises 47 member institutions and also has links with sector organisations, such as Advance HE and the QAA. If you are interested in joining, please contact Harriet: harriet@spinnaker-group.net

Support inclusion for those who stammer in university

Professor Deborah Johnston is a person who stammers. A professor of development economics and Pro-Director (Learning and Teaching) at SOAS University of London, she is currently supporting the implementation of the Inclusion@SOAS strategy.

Stammering affects 1% of adults worldwide, suggesting approximately 23,200 students in UK higher education are affected by stammering (using 2016/17 data). However, stammering seems to be the most invisible of 'hidden disabilities'. While it is defined as a disability and covered by the Equalities Act, few people who stammer (PWS) exercise their rights. This article argues that there is evidence that PWS can be excluded and discriminated at university, and that in some cases, this might be worsened by unreflective moves towards innovative pedagogy.

The British Stammering Association (BSA) note that stammering is identified by a tense struggle to get words out, involving the speaker blocking, prolonging or repeating sounds. Stammering is a neurological condition, with genetic and developmental influences, arising from malcoordination of the complex brain networks that enable speech production. As well as the physical manifestations of stammering, there is a large experiential and emotional component, including strong emotions towards stammering and oneself, such as frustration, sadness, embarrassment, shame and anxiety. As a result, stammering is not simply speech disfluency, but a complex communication issue which can affect one's confidence, self-esteem and self-efficacy.

The 'Stammerers Through University Consultancy' (STUC) partners with many universities and they help identify how PWS can be disadvantaged in university. Stammering can affect how someone participates in class, gets involved in group work and takes part in both assessed and formative verbally-based exercises. Students may avoid modules they would like to take because assessment is based on verbal ability.

This impact of stammering on university settings is supported by academic research that show both that many PWS feel that their life has been limited by stammering and also clear



evidence of negative stereotyping and stigma faced by PWS. Of particular interest is that fact that many studies of negative stereotyping are carried out with university students and suggest clear evidence that students that do not stammer are likely to make negative judgments of fellow students that do not (see most recently Boyle Blood and Blood (2009) who also provide a good summary of past research).

[Read the full blog here](#)

On 19th January 2019, SOAS sponsored a STUC conference, Silence on Campus: Making a noise about stammering. This conference was designed for both students and applicants as well as university lecturers and university teaching and learning leads. It discussed how students can manage activities and assignments that may be affected by stammering and find out about sources of support. For lecturer and teaching and learning leads, there was time to consider the various initiatives that can support those affected by stammering.

For outcomes of this conference and more information on how you can get involved in this work, please contact dj3@soas.ac.uk.

Fellowship support services: Bulk applications offer until 29 March 2019



HEA Fellowship demonstrates a personal and institutional commitment to professionalism in teaching and learning in higher education. Across four categories, from Associate to Principal, Fellowship provides individuals with recognition of their practice, impact and leadership of teaching and learning. There are now over 112,000 Fellows worldwide.

Ways you can support Fellowship

In-house Fellowship Writing Retreats

With expert support on hand throughout the day, this writing retreat provides a structured and guided environment in which to construct an application plan and identify the examples your staff will draw on within their account of professional practice; and use planning and reflection to develop a Fellowship application to meet the requirements for professional recognition at the appropriate category.

Fellowship workshops

This one day workshop prepares a group of staff to make applications for Fellowship at a specific category. The workshop provides dedicated space to focus on the requirements of Fellowship, review example applications and planning applications.

Bulk Fellowship applications offer

To celebrate the launch of the Fellowship Category Tool – a tool designed to assist you in selecting the category of Fellowship that is the closest match to your current practice – we are offering a 5% discount on the purchase of 8 or more Fellowship applications. The offer will run until 29 March 2019. Applications can be made at any time within one year of the date of purchase.

If you are interested in any of our Fellowship support services email solutions@advance-he.ac.uk or call +44(0) 1904 717553

Dates for your diary

Events and Conferences

Surveys Conference

The Surveys conference call for papers deadline closes on Monday 11 February 2019. Find out more: [Surveys Conference 2019](#)

GuildHE Symposium on Practice Informed Learning

This one-day symposium will take an in-depth look at the recent GuildHE publication Practice-Informed Learning – The rise of the dual professional, which can be found on their website [here](#). The event will look at the key challenges highlighted by the report and discuss how the sector can respond to these and how GuildHE and Advance HE can support this. Find out more: [Guild HE Symposium](#)

NET2019 Conference

Don't miss out on presenting at this year's NET2019 Conference which will be held on 3-5 September 2019 at Keele University. The call for abstracts is closing shortly on Friday 8 February 2019. Find out more and download the call for abstract details and submission guidelines here: [NET2019 Conference](#)

Teaching and Learning Conference

This annual conference will position the spotlight firmly on teaching in a global context, in particular this year the conference will explore innovation for teaching excellence focusing on innovative teaching practices and pedagogies and seeking to uncover new practice which demonstrates or contributes to teaching excellence and is improving the student experience. Find out more: [Teaching and Learning Conference 2019](#)

Upcoming programmes

Strategic Leadership Programme

Grow your leadership skills and gain the practical tools and insight required to successfully lead within senior teams. The programme starts on 12 February 2019, [apply by 1 February](#).

Future Professional Directors

Build the confidence and skills to lead successfully within and across professional services and the wider institution. Programme starts 13 March 2019, [apply by 13 February](#).

Transition to Leadership

Explore your personal, team and change leadership styles to influence and inspire others. The programme starts 20 February 2019, [apply now](#).

Strategic Finance Programme

Build your financial and legal literacy to operate confidently in the complex area of financial resourcing issues. The Programme starts 25 February 2019, [apply by 15 February](#).

Teaching Excellence Programme

Reinvigorate your teaching practice to make a real difference to the student learning experience. Programme starts 2 April 2019, [bookings are currently open](#).



Visit our website for full information on all [forthcoming programmes and events](#).