

Interview Guide / Questions

Participant cohort: Heads of academic workgroups

Introduction

Thanks for giving your time to be interviewed for this research project. You'll know after reading the Participant Information Statement that the aim of the project is to explore the ways in which academic workgroups organise its teaching, learning and curriculum activities, and broadly, how curriculum change happens within them.

To this end, we are particularly interested in the experiences and narratives of those academics in your work group that have completed a Graduate or Postgraduate Certificate in university teaching and learning, and your perceptions about how their learning from the course permeates the activities and life of the work group. Our primary interest is exploring in how academic work groups utilise the collective scholarly knowledge and institutional know-how of those academics that have completed formal study.

We will also be interviewing academics from your workgroup that have completed a Graduate or Postgraduate Certificate, conducting a focus group with them (should numbers be sufficient), and a focus group with other members of staff that identify as being members of your work group.

You will notice that this interview is being audio-recorded for later transcription. It is likely to take no more than an hour of your time. This is a confidential interview and you will not be personally identified in any part of the study.

If you have any questions as we proceed, please ask me. If there is anything you do not wish to respond to, please say so. Do you have any questions before we start?

1. How long have you been the Head of this academic workgroup, and how did you come to be in the role? What do you see the job as being about in terms of leading conversations about teaching, learning and curriculum?
2. I'd like to ask some questions about how teaching, learning and curriculum works in your context?
 - a. How would you describe the 'culture(s)' of learning and teaching in the workgroup?
 - b. To what extent would you describe these cultures as scholarly (ie, based in some form of research or evidence about effective teaching and student learning, or drawing on institutional datasets)? If not 'scholarly', is there another word/phrase you would use instead?
 - c. Describe the different fora where discussions about teaching and learning take place, how effective they are, and if you deem necessary, your suggestions for making them more effective.
 - d. In the workgroup, how would someone know they're an effective teacher, or that they've got a unit/subject/degree that is successful?
 - e. What can you tell me about the workgroup's approach to the use of student feedback? Are there any other ways that students are involved in influencing the direction of teaching, learning and curriculum (examples)?
 - f. How does the workgroup recognise effective teaching and learning, as well as support those teachers, units, courses that might need it?

3. Talk with me in general about how learning, teaching and curriculum development and renewal happens in your academic workgroup?
 - a. Who, or what initiates the process for change, and usually, for what reasons?
 - b. Share with me a recent example that illustrates how change happens.

4. I now want to ask a series of questions about the contributions (if any) of those academics that have completed a formal course (Postgraduate or Graduate Certificate) to learning, teaching and curriculum change conversations/action in the work group.
 - a. My records indicate that your workgroup contains x number of staff that have completed the course over x years. Thinking about your knowledge of these staff, what would you say has been their key contribution of the quality of curriculum conversations at the workgroup level?
 - b. Talk with me about some of the conceptual ideas or teaching practices that these staff contributed. What might be 2 examples of ideas/practices/concepts that have been accepted and embedded into the teaching and learning life of the workgroup? Have there been any particularly controversial practices/concepts?
 - c. What differences do you detect in the ways this group of staff approach their teaching, compared to others? In what ways (if any) do these differences come out in evaluations of teaching or student learning?

5. Final question: share with me what you see as the value-add of a Graduate or Postgraduate Certificate to the workgroup overall. If you don't perceive it to be a value-add, tell me a little about how see the relationship.

I've now come to the end of my questions. Is there anything you'd like to add, clarify or ask before we finish? Thank you so much for your time. Please get in touch with me with any future queries you have about the study.