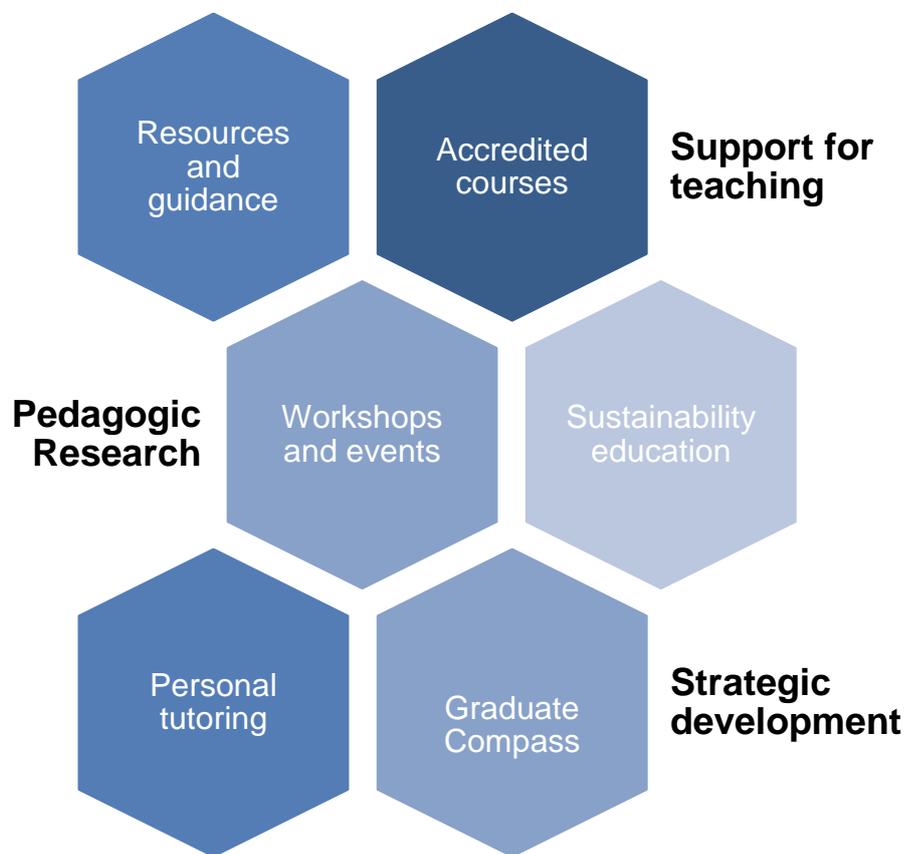


Teaching and Learning Support Annual Report, 2015-16



Professor Debby Cotton,

May 2016

TLS Annual Report 2015-2016

1. Introduction

Teaching and Learning Support (TLS) at Plymouth University is a team focused on enhancing teaching and learning across the university. We are an academic unit offering accredited courses, workshops, events and resources all underpinned by rigorous pedagogic research. We work closely with other teams including ASTI (Academic Support, Technology & Innovation) and Learning Support and Wellbeing (LSW). This report summarises the activities of the TLS team in 2015-16 and describes their services, locations and staffing structure.

The TLS team consists of academic developers with specialist expertise in a range of areas; sustainability education experts; and administrators. It is co-located with PedRIO, under whose auspices a research team work on internally and externally-funded pedagogic research projects. We have responsibility for delivering the university's Teaching and Learning Strategy, the Assessment Policy, and (with Talent and Organisational Development) the university policy on Teaching Qualifications and Professional Recognition.

The work of the TLS team underpins a number of the key teaching and learning success stories across Plymouth University, including the award of 20 National Teaching Fellows and 10 Principal Fellows of the Higher Education Academy, as well as the university's national and international successes in sustainability.

2. Headlines from the last year

- The TLS team achieved a 20th National Teaching Fellow (NTF) for the University, as Professor Debby Cotton received an award this year. Led by Ms Priska Schoenborn, TLS support for NTF applicants has made us one of the top performing universities in this scheme since its inception. For further information, see: <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/your-university/teaching-and-learning/national-teaching-fellowships>
- This year saw the award of £100,000 external funding to Dr Becky Turner from the TLS team and colleagues from Academic Partnerships and School of government, for one of HEFCE's Learning Gain projects. For more information, see <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/news/newsarchive/2015/Name,105306,en.html>
- In July 2015 members of the TLS team completed the HEA-funded project 'Evaluating teaching development in Higher Education: towards impact assessment' (Kneale, P. Winter, J. Turner, B. Spowart, L and Muneer, R.) The project developed a Toolkit resource to evaluate the impact of teaching-related CPD in HE contexts. The Toolkit will be published by the HE Academy on The 6th April 2016 and a national webinar discussing the project is scheduled for 12.30-14.00pm on the 1st June. Register at <https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/about/news/new-hea-research-webinars-announced>
- The TLS team led the development of the new Plymouth University Compass framework of graduate attributes which has been agreed by Teaching and Learning Committee and Academic Board and is now available on the web-site at: <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/your-university/teaching-and-learning/plymouth-university-compass>

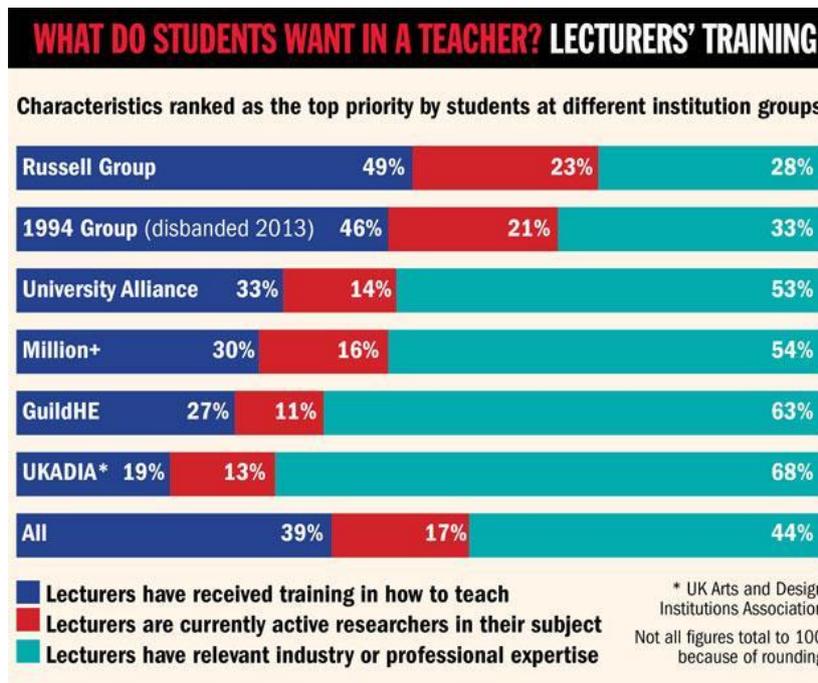
- The Teaching and Learning web-site has been completely refreshed and updated, with online links to events booking, and a comprehensive teaching and learning handbook for staff. It was cited as an example of good practice by the NUS. See: <http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/resources/comprehensive-guide-to-learning-and-teaching>
- TLS worked with the Student Union to produce an assessment handbook for undergraduates. The handbook has received positive feedback from international sources, and is available here: https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/uploads/production/document/path/5/5987/Undergraduate_Assessment_Handbook.pdf
- 2015 marked a successful start to the first year of the full Curriculum Enrichment Project (CEP), with positive feedback on the immersive module from students and staff (see CEP evaluation reports and information here: <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/your-university/teaching-and-learning/curriculum-enrichment-project>);
- The TLS team ran 75 CPD sessions with a total of 458 attendees from across the university (figures from August 2015 to July 2016 including registrations for pending events). We also contributed to the Researcher Development Programme, organised through the Graduate School, and ran several events for specific groups of staff (Associate lecturers, Senior Tutors, Programme leaders, AHTLs), as well as 1 day conferences;
- The TLS team support staff to gain recognition with the HEA through the Teaching Development Framework and the PGCAP/ ITL. All the university's HEA provision was successfully re-accredited in 2015, in a process which was led by TLS staff;
- The percentage of staff in the institution with teaching qualifications or recognition is continually increasing. Across the sector 61.9% of teaching staff are unqualified or of unknown status (2013-14 figures); the equivalent Plymouth University figure is 28.8%, and this subsequently dropped to 22.7% in 2014-15. (However, also see 'challenges' below);
- Plymouth is the overall best performing university in the People and Planet Green League, and ranked first in 2010 and 2015. TLS successes in sustainability education are evidenced by various international invitations, including to Professor Stephen Sterling from the International Council for Science (ICSU) to join an international panel of 40 experts to review the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and from UNESCO to co-chair the UNESCO-Japan Education for Sustainable Development Award international jury;
- The TLS team, working in partnership with UPSU, led the University's submission to the NUS Responsible Futures scheme for recognising excellence in whole institutional approaches to delivering Sustainability Education;
- The TLS team's work on inclusivity continues to have national impact – with requests for workshops and keynotes on inclusive teaching and unconscious bias, and a Tweet Chat. Staff from TLS have been working with the KomDim Academy in Germany (a collaboration of all 14 universities in North Rhine-Westphalia) to assist with the development of inclusive teaching, learning and assessment.
- The TLS team were invited to participate in an International Benchmarking exercise focused on International Student Employability and mobility (Tasmania, November, 2015). Lucy Spowart led the Plymouth contribution, and there was representation from 9 other universities across four countries.
- The TLS' sustainability education work continues to attract international attention, with a particularly strong showing at the World Environmental Education Congress in Gothenburg with six papers presented; keynotes/webinars for universities in the UK, US, China, Canada and Austria, and international research projects on sustainability competencies, energy literacy and sustainability in the Business curriculum.

3. Challenges for 2016-17

- The rapidly changing HE landscape and increasing pressure for excellence in teaching – exemplified by the proposal to introduce a Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) – offers both opportunities and challenges. The TLS team are already exploring some of the key issues, including the ways and extent to which GPA (Grade point average) is in use or under consideration across the sector;
- Changes to the Disabled Students' Allowance will impact particularly harshly on Plymouth, where a large proportion of our students have declared disabilities. There has been a focused push on this area, alongside the CEP developments to ensure that resources and workshops are provided to support academic staff in adjusting to the changes needed to ensure inclusivity. A project in SoGEES with DAS & TLS staff is exploring how to improve the inclusive student journey and a 7 Steps resource is being co-written with DAS to provide concise guidance. This will continue to be an ongoing area of activity as the changes come into play;
- Internationalisation of HE and partnerships between Plymouth University and UK or overseas institutions also provide pedagogic challenges. The TLS team have worked closely with our UK partners (particularly Greenwich School of Management (GSM), where we supported them to set up their own PGCAP programme), and we have also made links with our overseas partners at China Agricultural University (CAU). An on-going internationalisation project aims to ensure that best practice in internationalising the curriculum is embedded into Plymouth's programmes on campus.
- The university's commitment to 'hardwire sustainability into our teaching, research and operations' (PU Strategic Framework) presents a challenge to the TLS team to ensure that colleagues across the institution feel confident, empowered and supported to embed sustainability related content and pedagogies into their teaching and student learning. Maintaining our current sector-leading position is an acknowledged challenge.
- Changes to the way that the university has defined teaching staff in the HESA return have led to a recent drop in the proportion of staff who hold relevant qualifications or HEA recognition. This will have potential impacts on any use of the HESA data for league tables or in the TEF. The TLS team are currently in the process of identifying those staff members in the above category and targeting training and accreditation opportunities. We also propose to limit attendance on the accredited courses to those undertaking assessment, to increase the proportion of staff with accepted qualifications or recognition.

4. Teaching qualifications and professional recognition

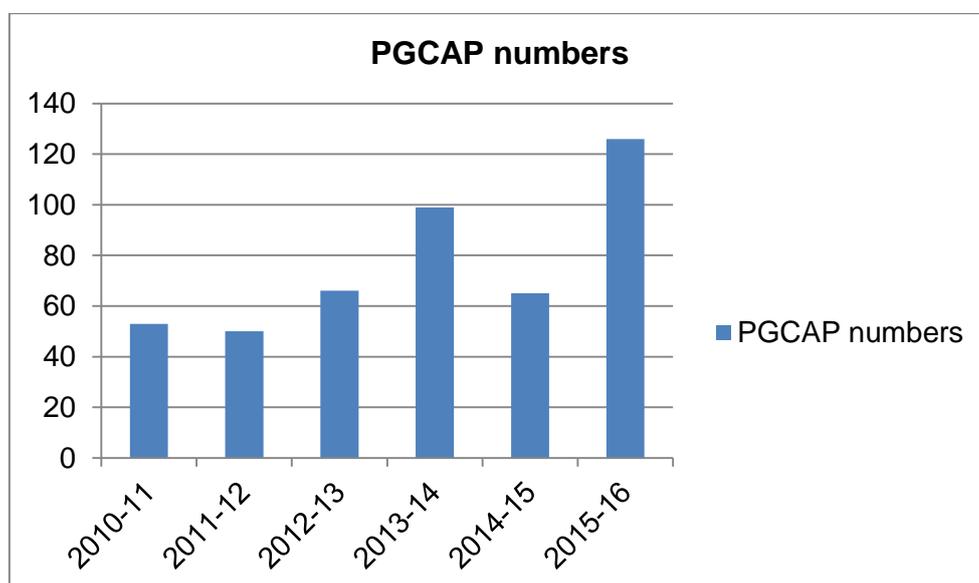
The University policy states that "Plymouth University seeks to employ and promote people who have a proven ability to deliver high quality teaching, and a recognized teaching qualification or professional recognition. Opportunities will be provided for those new to Higher Education teaching to gain the relevant qualification to enable them to fulfil their role." This is also a priority for students (see chart overleaf). TLS are responsible for ensuring that all staff involved in teaching and assessment activities are provided with opportunities to undertake appropriate training and acquire recognition through the HE Academy.

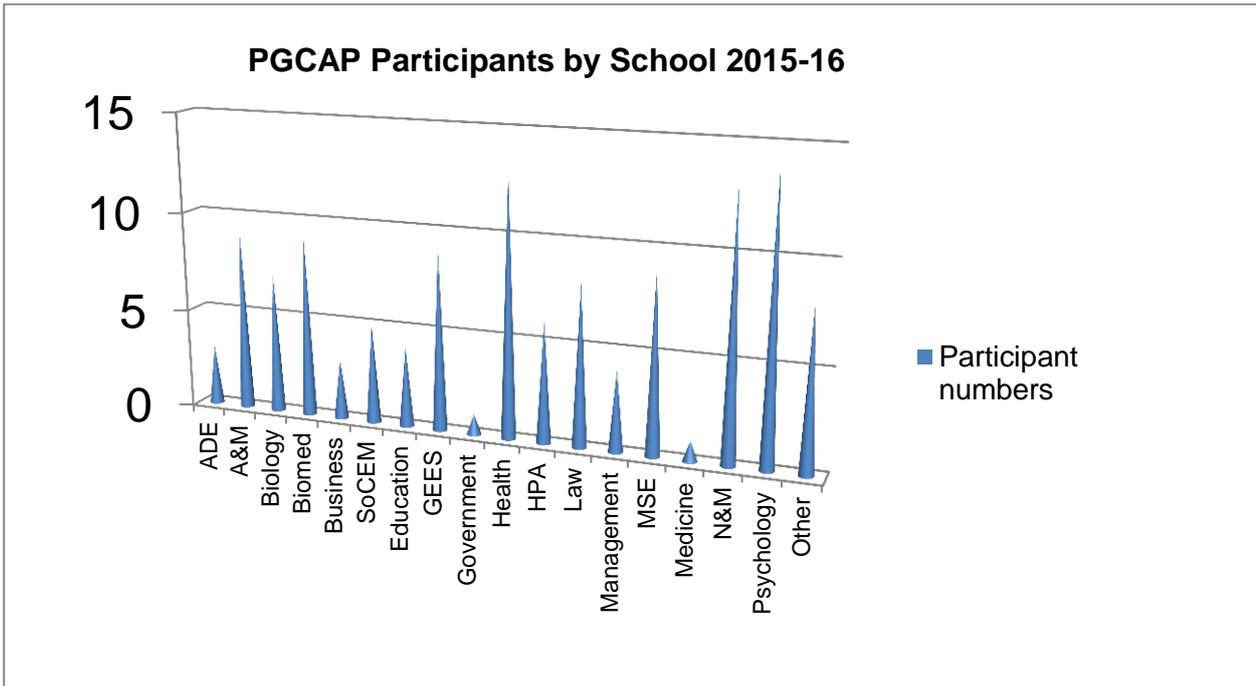


<https://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/content/student-survey-rates-teaching-qualifications-above-research-activity>

4. 1 PGCAP/ ITL

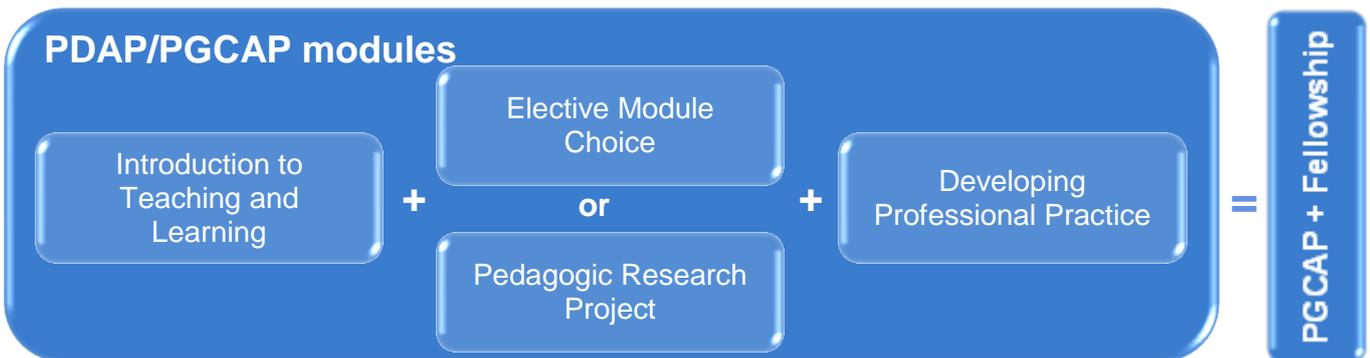
The Post Graduate certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP), led by Polly Magne, continues to receive good feedback. 96% of participants (n=50) reported that the course is well-organised and runs smoothly and 96% were satisfied with the quality of the course, highlighting the benefits of *'reflection across all our practice'*, *'interesting and enjoyable group discussions with colleagues from other disciplines'* and noting that, *'I have been very impressed with the Module leaders and enjoyed the diversity of materials and presentations/lectures they have given.'* 82% of participants agreed that 'the course is intellectually stimulating' and 88% noted that 'feedback on my work has been useful' [PTES, 2015]. The two most common issues raised relate to the competing demands on study time, and the complexity of the assessment particularly in the first module [Programme Rep. feedback and PTES, 2015]. We continue to lobby managers to ensure that study time is given to participants as outlined in university policy. Assessment has also been redesigned.





The PGCAP has been redesigned and reaccredited for 2015/16. This new programme fits with the CEP with a 20 credit module structure and early feedback. It has a clear progression pathway and offers participants more choice in relation to elective modules and assessment topics. It also incorporates some of the 'best bits of the previous programme such as: the micro-teach; Reviews of Educational Practice (REPs); and discussion across the disciplines.

PGCAP programme structure for 2015/16 onwards



The new PGCAP programme is accredited by the Higher Education Academy (HEA). To gain the PGCAP qualification participants must successfully complete three 20 credit modules of the PGCAP. This will also give them Fellowship of the HEA. Candidates who complete only the first module will be eligible for Associate Fellowship of the HEA.

4.2 Teaching development Framework (TDF)

The Teaching Development Framework continues to be a popular route for experienced staff to gain professional recognition for their teaching experience. Support for the scheme in TLS is provided by Oliver Webb and Priska Schoenborn, who is also an HEA accreditor.

The scheme has recently been reaccredited by the HEA. Changes introduced include increased word counts for Senior and Principal Fellowship applications and quarterly review panels. This calendar year, the TDF team have delivered 10 introductory workshops and 5 writing retreats. Since the start of academic year 2015/16, 2 writing cafés were held in collaboration with PGCAP tutors and Learning Development. In addition, some bespoke sessions with colleagues from specific subject disciplines have also been delivered. Applicants' writing is supported through personalised feedback as well as through the writing cafés. The feedback from the workshop participants has been positive, as exemplified below:

Thank you very much for this! I am delighted with the result. I also really appreciate your feedback both as I was working on the application and on the completed document. The workshops and assistance I received from TDF were essential, so thanks once again.
(Participant, 2015)

The presentation was pitched at the perfect level and I feel the supervisors left feeling enthused which was one of the main aims. (Clinical Lead, 2016)

Since the scheme began, 444 staff have engaged with the scheme across the four fellowship categories. Globally, there are 485 Principal Fellows and 3544 Senior Fellows (Higher Education Academy, Jan 2016) and at Plymouth we have awarded 12 Principal and 55 Senior Fellowships as well as 66 Fellowships and 8 Associate Fellowships.

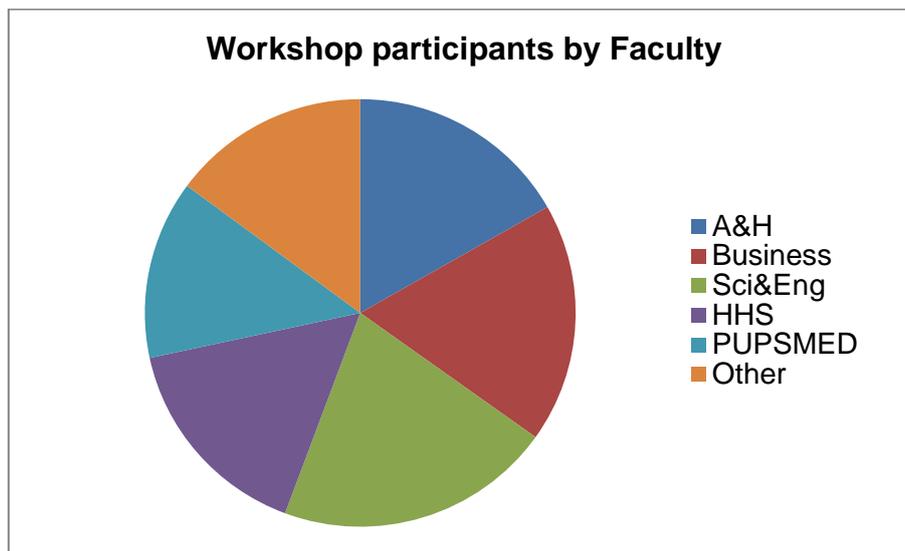
Staff engagement with TDF scheme and success rates

Faculty: (data to May 2016)	Initial engagement with TDF	Declared intention to apply	Submitted applications	Successful applications	Success rate
Arts & Humanities	86	64	31	31	100%
Business	100	73	31	26	84%
Health & Human Sciences	65	44	23	22	96%
PUPSMD	92	64	26	24	92%
Science & Environment	62	37	20	17	85%
TLS	15	14	11	11	100%
GSM London	7	7	4	4	100%
Other	17	10	6	6	100%
	444	313	152	141	93%

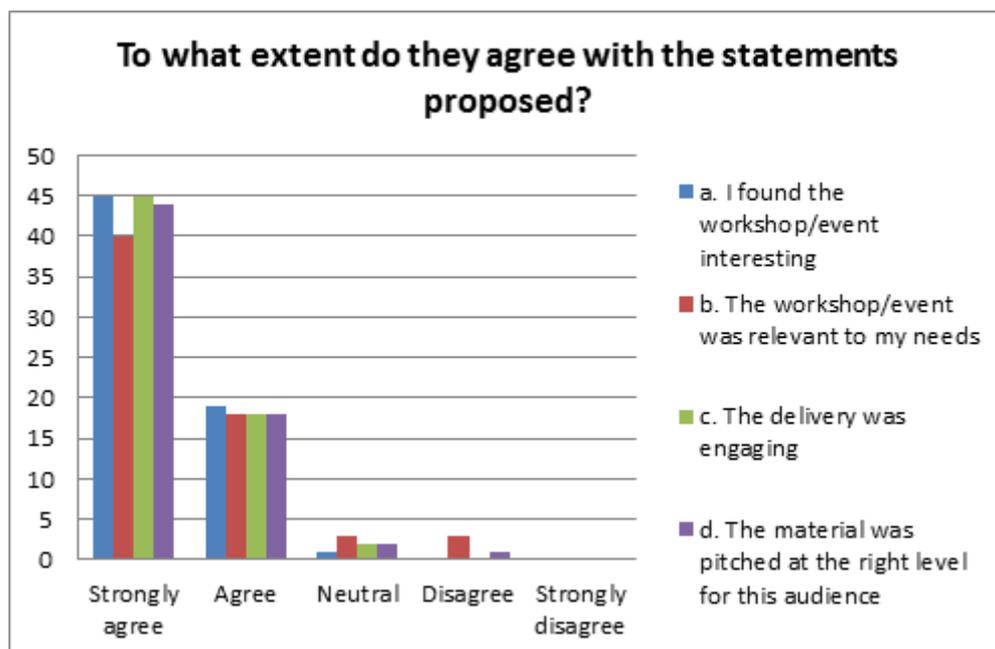
For further information: <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/your-university/teaching-and-learning/qualifications-and-accreditation/tdf>

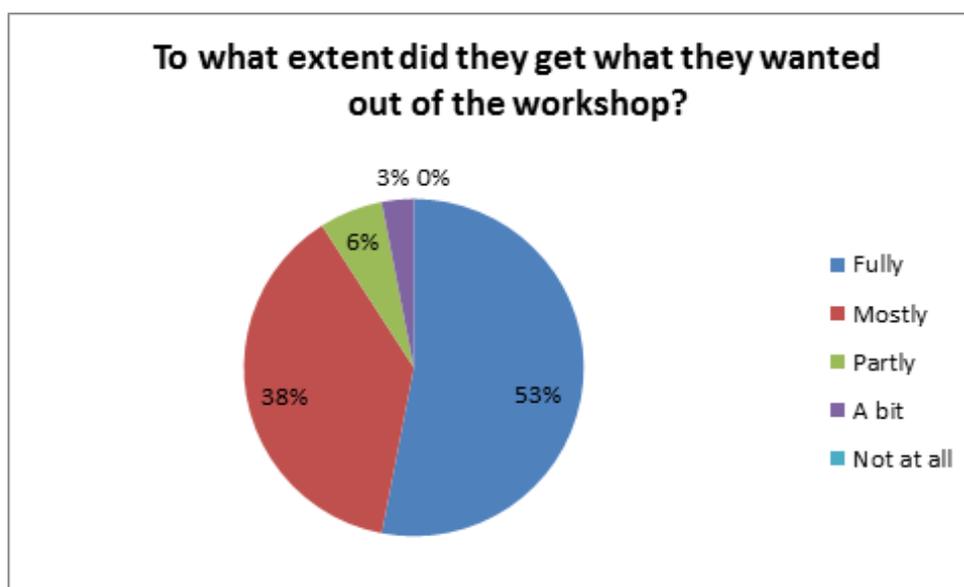
5. Workshops and support for teaching teams and individuals

The TLS team provide a programme of workshops on teaching and learning issues available to academic staff across the university. Over the last year, we have run 75 sessions with a total of 458 attendees from across the university (see faculty breakdown below). These include a series of five workshops on the theme of innovative pedagogies within sustainability education with a total of 72 participants. We have also contributed to the Researcher Development Programme, run through the Graduate School, and run several events for specific groups of staff (Associate lecturers, Senior Tutors, Programme Leaders, AHTLs).



Feedback from workshops is generally very positive, with participants particularly appreciating the provision of examples and tools which can be implemented in practice; the interactive discussions and opportunities for sharing; and the well-run, informal but informative approach.





Bespoke workshops are also offered to teaching teams, usually by the TLS link contact in that Faculty (e.g. for the Faculty of Health and Human Sciences five sessions from Jan-Dec 2015, N=143). Other targeted workshops this year included Britannia Royal Naval College (sessions on quality assurance, accreditation and peer review), integrating sustainability into Year One and Plymouth Plus modules, partnering with the student union to develop students as innovation partners in sustainability education, as well as working with various teaching teams across the Business School (on enhancing assessment and feedback practices). The impact of such interventions on NSS scores can be seen clearly in the table below, and we could encourage all teaching teams with concerns about NSS scores to approach their faculty contact for additional support (see Appendix A).

Changes to NSS scores (Data from CIS 2015)

ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK – Increase in NSS scores 2013-15.	Accounting & Finance	Dental Surgery	Marketing	Business Management
5.The criteria used in marking have been clear in advance	+20%	+40%	+25%	+27%
6.Assessment arrangements and marking have been fair	+20%	+37%	+23%	+39%
7.Feedback on my work has been prompt	+27%	+25%	+16%	+35%
8.I have received detailed comments on my work	+22%	+15%	+18%	+38%
9.Feedback on my work has helped me clarify things I did not understand	+23%	+25%	+25%	+47%

Alongside formal teaching sessions, the team also develop resources and offer individual, confidential advice on learning and teaching issues; pedagogic support and co-ordination; and staff capability issues in relation to teaching and learning. The Head of Educational Development can be contacted for confidential advice on teaching and learning performance issues. In cases where concerns are raised about teaching, we will meet with the individual and offer teaching observations and tailored support, as resources allow.

The online Teaching and Learning Handbook provides links to all teaching and learning policies, guidance and workshops from across the university, providing a one-stop-shop for all teaching and learning queries. It is available here: <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/your-university/teaching-and-learning/handbook>

6. The Plymouth Graduate Compass

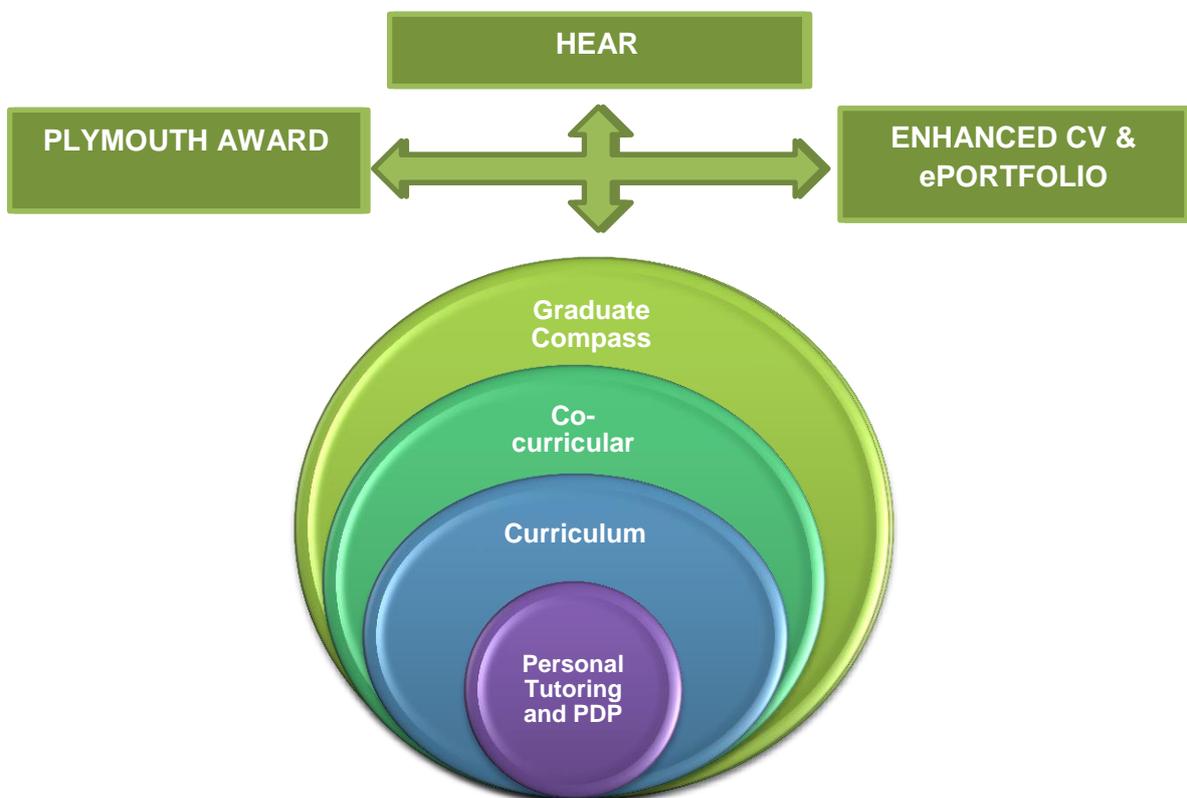
A new piece of work this year resulted in the Plymouth University Compass. The Compass was developed by TLS, in collaboration with students and academics across the institution. It is designed to help students navigate their way through the *whole* university experience in both taught curricula and extra-curricular activities. What people learn at university

prepares them for more than just a career, so the Compass identifies key attributes in four broad areas of life - academic, civic, professional, and personal. Plymouth University aims to provide plenty of opportunities to practice and develop these attributes, helping students gain experiences, improve skills, and build networks for their life beyond graduation.

The Compass also supports the university, as a community, to coordinate its efforts to offer students as broad an education as possible. It clarifies what the University values and what it anticipates will help graduates, in a future that is hard to predict.

This innovation now forms a key part of the university's co-curricular offer, with work ongoing to map all co-curricular activities to the Graduate Compass, as well as linking to the HEAR and Personal Tutoring (see diagram below).

For more information, see: <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/your-university/teaching-and-learning/plymouth-university-compass>



Appendix A: Staff associated with Teaching and Learning Support

Professor Debby Cotton, Head of Educational Development



Lead for Educational Development
Lead for Research Management
PGCAP tutor
Member of: University Teaching, Learning and Quality Committee;
Senior Leadership Forum; Equality and Diversity Committee;
Sustainability Executive; PiE Research Committee;
PedRIO Steering Group.

Ms Jane Collings, Educational Developer (0.6fte)



Lead for Inclusive Assessment
Lead for the Teaching and Learning website and handbook
Supporting embedding of the Curriculum Enrichment Project

Dr Sharon Gedye, Educational Developer (0.6fte)



Co-lead for ITL
PGCAP tutor
Contact for Student Services
7 Steps series editor
Lead for employability

Ms Polly Magne, Educational Developer and PGCAP Programme Director



Faculty contact for PUPSMED
PGCAP Programme Lead
Lead for Internationalisation
Module lead: PGCAP705 Developing Professional Practice
Member of Institute of Education Teaching and Learning Committee

Ms Priska Schoenborn, Educational Developer



Faculty contact for Science and Engineering
PGCAP tutor
Lead for Technology Enhanced Learning
Module lead: PGCAP 702: Negotiated Study Module
National Teaching Fellowship Scheme lead
HEA accreditor

Dr Lucy Spowart, Educational Developer (0.7fte)



Lead for personal tutoring
PGCAP tutor

Professor Stephen Sterling, Professor of Sustainability Education (0.8fte)



Chair of Sustainability Executive Group
Sustainability Action Plan SEG Group
PedRIO Steering Group

Dr Becky Turner, Educational Developer (0.7fte)



Faculty contact for Business (with Lynne Wyness)
PGCAP tutor
Module lead: 'Pedagogic Research' modules
CEP evaluation lead

Dr Paul Warwick, Educational Developer



Lead for Sustainability Education (CSF)
Sustainability Executive Group: Lead for Teaching and Learning
Student Experience Committee
PedRIO Steering Group

Dr Oli Webb, Educational Developer



Faculty contact for Health and Human Sciences
PGCAP tutor
Manager of Teaching Development Framework (TDF)
Lead for widening participation

Dr Jennie Winter, Educational Developer



Faculty contact for Arts and Humanities
Co-lead for ITL
PGCAP tutor
Member of Sustainability Executive
Lead for evaluation

Dr Lynne Wyness, Educational Developer



Faculty contact for Business (with Becky Turner)
PGCAP tutor
Lead for enterprise education and skills development
Pedagogic research lead

Ms Jane Dalrymple, Senior Administrator



Senior administrator/PA to Professor Pauline Kneale and
Professor Debby Cotton

Ms Laurence Lemee-Stokes (0.5fte), Administrator



TDF and TLS events and website administrator

Ms Sara Meredith, Administrator



PGCAP and ITL programme administrator

Ms Sally Owen (0.5fte), Administrator



TLS finance, HR and events administrator

General contact details: Teachandlearn@plymouth.ac.uk or pgcap@plymouth.ac.uk or tdf@plymouth.ac.uk