**Short Abstract of research and development outcome for SEDA website**

Title: Value and power: perceptions of Education Focused academic careers in research intensive universities

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The landscape of Higher Education in the UK is constantly changing and the proportion of academic staff on education focused (EF) contracts has increased from 10% of the workforce in 2002 (Gretton & Raine 2017), 26% in 2014/15 to 32% in 2019/20 (HESA Data). An EF academic may experience difficulties in career progression (Gretton & Raine 2017) and identity (Cashmore et al 2013), particularly in a research intensive environment (Cashmore et al 2013, Martin 2012) and across the sector there is also a rising level of poor mental health amongst academics (Moorish 2019). However, we do not have a clear and current understanding of what factors facilitate or are barriers to career progression for EF academics in research intensive universities. Our study aimed to address this gap.

We conducted semi-structured interviews with 45 EF academics at differing stages of their career from 11 research intensive universities across three UK nations. Framework analysis utilised two appropriate organizational theories; Kanter’s structural theory of power within organisations (Kanter 1993) and Feldman and Ng’s theory of career mobility, embeddedness and success (Feldman & Ng 2007), as lenses through which to explore this topic.

Some key findings from the preliminary analysis include:

* There is limited agreement as to what an EF pathway is across the sector and within organisations, and therefore promotion criteria may not be clear
* Peer networks (both internal and external to the organisation) are important enablers of career progression
* There is significant variability in the value placed on education and EF academics at both organisational and work group level
* Senior school management culture is a significant influence on the experience of EF academics
* Finding time to undertake scholarly work or other career development activity is a common barrier for EF academics as their time is often less flexible due to scheduled teaching related activities

We aim to publish our full findings in one or more academic journals for which we will provide a link in due course. We have submitted an article to Educational Developments which reflects on our experience of undertaking this research.

**References**

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