Session title: Where are they now? In their own words: the impact of taught PGCerts accredited by Advance HE on staff learning & teaching practice and progression

Session type: Paper

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Session summary:
This talk presents staff perceptions of the impact of the University Certificate in Academic Practice (UCAP) and Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCAP) on their professional prospects, performance and wellbeing. There is particular insight into how the courses have impacted on learning and teaching practice and what tangible changes staff identify as a result of completing these courses. The findings are potentially relevant to anyone looking into the delivery and enhancement of similar courses.

Session outline:
Programmes such as PG Certificates in Academic Practice which are accredited by Advance HE are increasingly mandatory for teachers new to higher education. Many studies have considered the impact of such taught courses on educators' skills and practices in supporting learning (Gibbs & Coffey, 2004) and the impact on confidence and competence of educators (Postareff, 2011). Course evaluations show that staff can have mixed feelings about these courses, but overall, we gain very positive feedback. However, this feedback is based on experience gained while staff are studying on or have just completed the UCAP (20 credits with AHEA) or PGCAP (60 credits with FHEA). In order to evaluate the potential impact of the two courses, we are inviting staff who have completed or who are currently enrolled on either the UCAP or PGCAP to share their experiences. We are particularly interested in how staff perceive the courses to have affected their teaching practice and their students' learning experience. We also wish to ascertain what other tangible benefits or effects, if any, staff feel the courses have helped them to achieve. This may be anything from a sense of personal growth, confidence, promotion, or additional aspects to their role such as course directorship or mentoring. Additionally, since the COVID-19 pandemic, staff training courses play a role in establishing sustainable faculties (Bugallo-Rodríguez et al, 2020), and helping staff resist burnout especially through developing communities of practice (Mulholland et al, 2023) We are also interested in identifying what networks staff have formed as a result of our courses as well as any impact on wellbeing potentially experienced during their studies. We would like to share our findings and address how they will inform our reaccreditation and periodic review as well as identify ways to best support staff new to teaching in HE.

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