National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

An Investigation of unaccredited CPD training for Teaching and Learning Professionals across a sample of higher education institutions in Ireland

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Executive Summary

This report aims to investigate the range, depth and typologies that comprise the provision of unaccredited continuing professional development (CPD) training to teaching and learning professionals across a sample of higher educational contexts in the Republic of Ireland. A subordinate secondary aim seeks to explore the culture among teaching and learning professionals toward participation in CPD training and the effect this has on their professional practice in higher education.

Research objectives

Specifically, the research questions to be addressed by this research project are as follows;

1 – What ranges and typologies of unaccredited CPD training are being offered for teaching and learning staff within Higher Education sectors in the Rep of Ireland?

2 – What is the uptake of unaccredited CPD among teaching and learning professionals in Higher Education and from which discipline/professional groupings do they come?

3 – What is the culture and practice among teaching and learning professionals regarding unaccredited CPD participation and activity?

4 - What are the practical outcomes of participating in the CPD among teaching and learning professionals within Higher Education in Ireland?

Research Design

This project will utilise a mixed methodology approach through a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to collect data from a number of sources of evidence. This approach is adopted to support the emergence of convergences in findings to addressing this projects specified research questions (Yin, 2009). Quantitative data was gathered in the form of questionnaires disseminated to Learning and Development Officers (LDOs) across a sample of higher educational institutions. Qualitative data was collect from the following sources;

1. A Survey containing open ended questions that was disseminated to LDOs across a sample of higher education institutions in the Ireland.
2. Semi-structure interviews with LDOs across a sample of higher education institutions in the Ireland.
3. Focus group conduced with Teaching & Learning professionals across eight disciplinary groupings drawn from across the sample of participating higher education institutions.

Research Participants

In total there were twelve institutions that participated in this study. All twelve of these institutes completed a survey, while thirteen individuals designated as learning development officer's participated in interviews.

A total of 28 individuals participated in seven different focus groups across the institutions.

Key Findings

RANGES AND TYPOLOGIES

- Five distinct typologies of unaccredited CPD emerged from the data.
  - o Digital Capacity – Aimed at developing professional competencies using specific softwares & competencies in technology enhanced learning, teaching and assessment.
  - o Pedagogy – Primarily concerned with specific pedagogical approaches and personal teacher development skills, but also including student diversity and developing student's personal competencies.
  - o Assessment – Development surrounding individual and group assessment strategies. Also includes assessment administration strategies.
  - o Academic Development – Focus on maintaining academic standards and developing on skills particularly relevant for academics and their work. This also included research supervision.
  - o Curriculum Design – Professional development surrounding initial curriculum design, its review/evaluation and continued improvement.
- The significant majority of programmes offered (43%) were in the area of digital capacity followed by the area of pedagogy (28%).
- A minimal amount of programmes are offered in the areas of assessment and curriculum design.
- A significant margin in the amount of programmes offered in institutions is apparent across the sample:
  - o Digital Capacity – 1-16
  - o Pedagogy – 1-10
  - o Assessment – 0-5
  - o Academic Development – 1-10
  - o Curriculum Design – 0-3

  Similar variances are seen in the sub-categories of these areas.
- Unaccredited CPD was classified in a variety of forms – Workshops; Conferences; Courses; Seminars; Summer Schools; Online Sessions

UPTAKE

- A majority of institutions identified that they maintain a record of uptake at unaccredited CPD programmes.
- Uptake of unaccredited CPD is recorded as a basic record of attendance/numbers present in some institutions while others record names. However, this recording of attendance may not be done at all programmes dependant on the institution, suggesting an additional level of variability in approach.
- Interviews identified a trend of lower numbers in attendance at these unaccredited programmes which exists across most institutions. While there are some exceptions to this

trend, such as PhD supervision for example, significant variability in attendance levels were reported where attendance at events was being recorded.

- Teaching and learning professionals suggested there was a lack of clarity regarding the role of unaccredited CPD and were unclear regarding how much value was attached to their participation in such programmes.
- Participating teaching and learning staff reported being recently more selective regarding which forms of non-accredited CPD to engage with, emphasising those courses that they felt were directly relevant to their particular teaching or subject area.

CULTURE AND PRACTICE

- Within institutions a cultural drift has been identified that leads away from the teaching and learning role that academics hold into other aspects of their role (i.e. research outputs). A number of *external* influences and *internal* influences were identified as having had an influence on this process.
- One important source of *External Influences* are recent report documents such as the Hunt Report (2011) and the European Standards & Guidelines documents were identified as having a direct influence on the development of Institutional Strategic plans. While these documents placed an emphasis on the development of teaching and learning within institutions, many participants other strategic goals were more clearly targeted. University ranking metrics were also identified as an important influence on the selection and provision of unaccredited CPD across the sample. The pressure felt by the application of metrics to the work of the university appeared to have an impact on people's willingness to engage in unaccredited CPD, with many staff feeling other aspects of their role were more clearly measured or valued.
- Other external influences that were identified as having an influence on the culture of engagement with non-accredited CPD were recent industrial relations agreements, such as the Croke Park and Haddington Road Agreements. These combined with the lack of specific disciplinary guidelines for levels of engagement with teaching and learning CPD had an impact on staff perceptions of the importance of participating in teaching and learning CPD.
- An *Internal Influence* on were institutional strategic plans. The majority of institutions had a specific strategic plan for teaching and learning development or staff CPD in teaching and learning. All institutions also addressed teaching and learning within their strategic plans more generally .
- CPD provision has formed a part of a majority of institutions strategic plans for the purposes of increasing student engagement and/or improving teaching and learning practices within the institutions. The focus, however, lies on what CPD is provided rather than how it will be provided.
- As regarding performance management systems and career progression processes for academic staff in higher education institutions within this sample, the majority of teaching and learning participants also reported that non-accredited teaching and learning CPD was not given much consideration or importance. Some reported that there was not even a way to include such CPD for consideration within these processes. In contrast, some other participants reported that engagement with accredited CPD was given some consideration and institutional support.

- The role of Head of Department was identified as being highly influential on the levels of engagement among staff within particular institutions. The values and objectives of differing heads were felt to explain much of the local variability in engagement in unaccredited CPD identified in this study.

- Departmental influences and the needs of particular course being offered by particular departments had an influence on identification of goals for non-accredited CPD. Head of Department were identified as being very important for supporting these "Bottom-up" processes and ensuring follow through. The recommendations of course boards were also important.

- Many participants suggested that personal interest and motivation for increasing learning in the area of teaching and learning CPD was a major influence on their levels of engagement. However, a culture of professional development for the sake of professional development was not viewed as an appropriate buy-in to attend programmes. Disciplinary professionals and LDOs suggested that greater institutional supports for attending programmes would be a benefit in promoting engagement into the future.

- Professionals in the area have found it increasingly difficult to attend programmes due to constraints on their time due to teaching and research. In effect if they do not see a particular time/cost benefit to themselves they will not attend.

- Many professionals suggested that the lack of clarity regarding recognition for participation in CPD or development in teaching and learning influenced their decisions regarding whether to participate in CPD, and in particular unaccredited CPD.

- Both LDOs and teaching and learning professionals saw potential benefits for greater linkages between accredited and unaccredited CPD in higher education and felt this would provide clarity and transparency regarding incentives for engagement.

PRACTICAL OUTCOMES

- Learning outcomes for the unaccredited CPD programmes offered in the majority of institutions were not provided.

- The practical outcomes of unaccredited CPD programmes are not identified or measured by all but one the participating institutions. As such, these institutions did not have any formal procedure of assessing the impact engagement with non-accredited CPD had on later teaching and learning practices among staff. One institution has assessed the impact on teaching and learning practices of participating in non-accredited CPD in the past and found that between 40 -50% of participants utilised learning from CPD in their later professional practice.

- For professionals in the area they saw a benefit in terms of developing their own competencies and skills.

- Participants were also identified the development of links and collaborations with other colleagues as an important practical outcome of engaging with non-accredited CPD. The development of informal communities of practice or more formal mentoring relationships was identified as being very important in supporting staff development and evolving teaching and learning practices.

- A practical outcome of engaging unaccredited CPD identified by many teaching and learning professionals was that they had less time to direct toward other aspects of their role as

academics. This was having a negative impact on their potential career progression as they reported other aspects of their role were given greater weight in interview or progression settings.

SUGGESTED FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- It was the view of both LDOs interviewed and among professionals across focus groups that the culture within higher education nationally regarding engagement with non-accredited CPD could be supported into the future through a number of suggested initiatives. These suggestions were aimed at influencing the culture within Irish Higher Education in order to support greater future engagement with unaccredited CPD. These initiatives have been categorised into *national* initiatives, *institutional* focussed initiatives and *disciplinary profession* focussed initiatives.

- At a **national level** a need was communicated for a national framework for the professional recognition of ongoing engagement with unaccredited CPD. This would provide a nationally recognised approach for recognising professional development. The need also to clarifying the role of CPD and providing clear guidelines for engagement with CPD was identified as important.
- The ability to attain credits for engagement with a range of self-directed unaccredited programmes was a repeated suggestion across both teaching and learning professionals and LDOs. While this was identified as being both complex and potentially difficult, the adoption of a national strategy for accrediting ongoing engagement with a portfolio of unaccredited CPD was suggested as a possible policy future direction in providing clear incentive to staff to maintain on-going CPD participation. However, greater links between unaccredited and accredited CPD was also felt to be important.
- A coordinated national approach to support and promotion of inter-institutional collaboration in the area of unaccredited CPD was suggested. Specifically, the creation a national directory of expertise in teaching and learning across higher education and an open access national repository of teaching and learning materials, pedagogical approaches and other such resources.
- This was inclusive of policy initiatives and funding allocations from the HEA providing clear messages regarding the status and importance of continuing teaching and learning development among staff across higher education in Ireland. This would provide greater clarity to the individual institutions about the role of CPD within higher education and that it was valued nationally.

- At an **Institutional level**, there were many references to a need for management commitment, clear practical action on strategic plans and systematic encouragement surrounding CPD. The Strategic plans of higher education institutions should make clearer references to the role engagement with CPD, and in particular unaccredited CPD, played in achieving the objectives being targeted by the organisation. The development of specific strategic plan for teaching and learning CPD or staff development was also suggested. These

would provide clearer messages to teaching and learning professionals regarding why they should engage with CPD and the role such CPD played in their roles.

- The creation of roles to support the co-ordination and sourcing of CPD within institutions was also felt to be important in supporting future engagement among teaching and learning professionals. It was a clear message across participants that Teaching and Learning Centres were important in supporting staff engagement.

- Inclusion within the performance measurement architecture in higher education of recognition for staff participation in unaccredited CPD would provide clear messages regarding the value attached to such endeavours. Most participants in the current study did not feel that their engagement with CPD was considered as part of their performance management experiences or career progression assessments. Such a move would also link participation in CPD to career progression and time allocation planning for teaching and learning professionals.

- Some teaching and learning professional also felt engagement with teaching and learning CPD should be mandatory and compulsory for staff in higher education. This was suggested to apply to both accredited and unaccredited CPD. There was not overall agreement on this point however.

- The Head of Departments within departments across higher education institutions should be give clear messages regarding the value attached to participating in unaccredited CPD. Funding and greater local autonomy to identify and source CPD was also suggested as a way of fostering greater efficiencies and engagement with CPD into the future.

- At a **Disciplinary Professional Bodies** level**,** many participants suggested looking to other existing frameworks for making comparisons and suggestions regarding how CPD was viewed, acknowledged or accredited.

- Some felt being part of a professional body brings with it an expectation of professional development, while others comparatively noted that other teaching and learning professionals (such as those in primary and secondary education) required professional accreditation in order to fill a teaching and learning role.

- Some participant suggested that a professional body be developed based on UK model for higher education lecturers or teachers. They suggested this as a means of allowing academics to work towards a professional award in recognition of expertise in teaching and learning, such as a fellowship for example.

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List of Acronyms

CAO – Central Applications Office

CPD – Continued Professional Development

DES – Department of Education and Skills

EU – European Union

FG – Focus Group

HEA – Higher Education Authority

HECA – Higher Education Colleges Association

HEI – Higher Education Institute

LDO – Learning and Development Officer

NFQ – National Framework of Qualifications

PPI – Programmes Per Institute

1.0 - Introduction

1.1 Background to the study and research aims:

This project aims to investigate the range and depth of provision of continuing professional development (CPD) training to teaching and learning professionals across a sample of higher educational contexts in the Republic of Ireland. A secondary aims seeks to explore the culture among teaching and learning professionals toward participation in CPD training and the effect this has on their professional practice in higher education. The scope of available unaccredited CPD in higher education in Ireland is an under researched area. The current research project is being conducted on behalf of the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education and will be used to inform the development of a national strategy to provide direction in the domain.

This project will utilise a mixed methodology approach through a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to collect data from a number of sources of evidence. This approach is adopted to support the emergence of convergences in findings to addressing this projects specified research questions (Yin, 2009). A range of relevant stakeholders involved in the provision and uptake of unaccredited CPD training in higher education will be consulted across a representative sample of higher education institutions in the Republic of Ireland. The relevant stakeholders to be consulted will comprise teaching and learning professionals across a range of disciplinary domains and management personnel involved in the co-ordination or planning off CPD training across a range of higher education institutions.

1.2 Research Objectives

Specifically, the research questions to be addressed by this research project are as follows;

1 – What ranges and typologies of unaccredited CPD training are being offered for teaching and learning staff within Higher Education sectors in the Rep of Ireland?

2 – What is the uptake of unaccredited CPD among teaching and learning professionals in Higher Education and from which discipline/professional groupings do they come?

3 – What is the culture and practice among teaching and learning professionals regarding unaccredited CPD participation and activity?

4 - What are the practical outcomes of participating in the CPD among teaching and learning professionals within Higher Education in Ireland.

5 - Based on current participation patterns and provision, what unaccredited CPD training needs might be identified for teaching and learning professionals in the future?

1.3 Outline of report:

Section 2: Rationale for Research

Section 3: Research Design

Section 4: Results

Section 5: Synthesis and Recommendations

2.0 – Contextual Background

2.1 Introduction:

This project aimed to explore the range and breadth of unaccredited professional development opportunities which are available to teaching and learning professionals across a representative sample of higher education institutions in the Republic of Ireland. With an ever increasing diversity of students in higher education it is important that their needs be met from a teaching and learning perspective. However, across higher education institutions in Ireland, and the EU more generally, the 19th century model off higher education is still in place (Hooker, 1997). In this model teaching and learning is viewed as a process of imparting knowledge by means of lectures to those who want to acquire it. (European Commission, 2013). Yet, in many ways, the context in which higher education takes place has dramatically changed over recent years, leading to changes of role and expectations for those teaching and learning professionals working within higher education.

To ensure that they are afforded the greatest level of teaching and learning it is essential that those who are leading their classes are suitably qualified and knowledgeable about relevant successful pedagogical and assessment techniques (European Commission, 2013). An ability to utilize these techniques correctly and tailor to them to their classes own individual needs is an important step towards ensuring the most valuable educational experience to students. "Excellent teachers are made, not born; they become excellent through investment in their teaching abilities" (European Science Foundation, 2012, p.vii). In a digital age, the use of digital mediums and technology to enhance the learning experience is something which can be taken advantage of.

In recent years a number of reports have studied the quality of teaching and learning in higher education – producing findings that are directly relatable to the present report. These along with other topics will be explored further in this section to provide a contextual background to the current study.

2.2 Irish 3rd Level System:

The Higher Education Authority (HEA) is the statutory planning and development body for higher education and research in Ireland. Third level institutions in Ireland consist of 7 Universities, 14

Institutes of Technology, 7 Colleges of Education and a number of other institutions that provide specialist education in a variety of fields (DES 2015).

Access to undergraduate courses in universities, institutes of technology, colleges of education and some other institutes of higher education are granted by successful application to the Central Application Office (CAO).

The HEA possesses wide advisory powers within the third-level sector and also act as the funding authority for the universities, institutes of technology and other designated higher education institutes (DES 2015).

2.3 Key term definitions:

Continued Professional Development (CPD):
A general definition of professional development encompasses 'formal courses and programs in professional education and to the formal and informal development of professional skill that occurs in the work-place' (Dall'Alba & Sandberg, 2006; 384). Continued professional development refers to any means by which professionals maintain and advance their knowledge and skills related to the field within which they work. It can be gained both formally (through courses/programmes) and informally (through daily work experience/research).

In a higher education setting CPD can take many form that 'increased capacity for professional autonomy' (Kennedy, 2005: 248). These can include participating in accredited modules or programmes, but may also include participating in a range of non-accredited forms of teaching and learning CPD, such as participating in workshops, presenting at a conference, or undertaking pedagogical research for example (National Forum for Enhancement of teaching and learning in Higher Education, 2015).

Unaccredited CPD:
For the purposes of this study, unaccredited CPD refers to any professional development training programmes undertaken by staff which does not explicitly culminate in an award or a qualification. These are programmes which are made available to staff to attend of their own free will for the purposes of skill and competency development. However, these activities are not as easy to map as accredited professional development. The Nation Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning (2015) suggested three typologies for engagement with non-accredited CPD that provides a broad framework for understanding the scope for engagement with non-accredited CPD among teaching and learning professionals (see Fig. 1 below).

Unlike accredited forms of CPD, non-accredited CPD provides a number of challenges for supporting staff engagement. Chiefly, the nebulous and varied nature of the offerings in the area of non-accredited CPD can lead to challenges in recognition of learning achieved and measurement of levels of engagement from participant. This may be particularly the case in measurement of individual learning outcomes from participation in collaborative forms of non-accredited CPD. Indeed, non-accredited CPD does not currently have a recognition or measurement process to represent the

learning achieved (National Forum for Enhancement of teaching and learning in Higher Education, 2015).

Figure. 1 Typologies for engagement with non-accredited CPD (Forum for Enhancement of Teaching and learning in Higher Education, 2015: 12).

National Framework of Qualifications:
The National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) is the framework set forth by the European Higher Education Area that identifies the variety in awards available and who the awarding bodies are. It is a "ten-level system giving an academic or vocational value to qualifications obtained in Ireland (QQI 2014).

2.4 The Future of Higher Education in Ireland:
The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 presented a vision of higher education that could "successfully meet the many social, economic and cultural challenges that face us over the coming decades, and meet its key roles of teaching and learning, research, scholarship, and engagement with wider society" (Hunt et al. 2011:4).

The report described the three core roles of higher education, identified as Teaching and Learning; Research and Engagement with wider society. Within these core areas the document described what a higher education system, matching the vision identified above should look like.

In reviewing the contemporary context within higher education in Ireland the Hunt report acknowledges significant advances in teaching and learning: through the establishment of centres for educational development; availability of professional programmes on teaching and learning; technology supports learning; adoption of new pedagogies; increasing emphasis on teaching in promotion procedures. Importantly, however, it also acknowledges that these are neither "uniform or consistent across higher education" (Hunt et al., 2011:5)

A major strategic objective put forward in the Hunt Report was to place explicit emphasise on the development of teaching skills for teaching and learning professionals in higher education settings, stating that "it is not sufficient for academics to be experts in their disciplinary area; they also need to know how best to teach that discipline" (Hunt et al., 2011:59). This perspective was guided by the existing requirements in Ireland for teachers at various other levels of the education system to have a professional qualification, except for third level. The Hunt Report references the clear direction of the European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance which specifies that all institutions 'satisfy themselves that staff involved with the teaching of students are qualified and competent to do so'.

The section concluded:

> Teaching staff should be given opportunities to develop and extend their teaching capacity and should be encouraged to value their skills. Institutions should provide poor teachers with opportunities to improve their skills to an acceptable level and should have the means to remove them from their teaching duties if they continue to be demonstrably ineffective. (Hunt et al. 2011: 59-60)

2.5 Improving the Quality of Teaching and Learning – European Standpoint:

"Improving the quality of teaching and learning in Europe's higher education institutions" is a report produced by a high level group for the European Commission in 2013 that targeted the modernisation of higher education.

Acknowledging that "teaching and learning are fundamental core missions of our universities and colleges" (European Commission, 2013) they made a number of recommendations towards the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning in all institutions across Europe. Key recommendations relevant to the current study are:

- Public authorities responsible for higher education should ensure the existence of a sustainable, well-funded framework to support higher education institutions' efforts to improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- All staff teaching in higher education institutions in 2020 should have received certified pedagogical training. Continuous professional education as teachers should become a requirement for teachers in the higher education sector.
- Academic staff entrance, progression and promotion decisions should take account of an assessment of teaching performance alongside other factors.
- Higher education institutions – facilitated by public administrations and the EU – should support their teachers so they develop the skills for online and other forms of teaching and learning opened up by the digital era, and should exploit the opportunities presented by technology to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

These recommendations hold a particular relevance to the vision created by the Hunt Report in 2011. Similarities exist throughout, concerning training opportunities being provided to professionals, teaching performance being included in progression/promotion decisions and the recognition of professionals needing to have some sort of certification/qualification.

Commencing initially from the Bologna process but more recently through the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG), European-wide policy developments have had a significant influence on the development of national policies and quality assurance guidelines that that currently exist. Indeed, the ESG seven elements regarding internal and external quality assurance systems are embedded in the internal quality assurance systems for all HEIs recognised by the state. The quality assurance of teaching and learning and the appraisal and development of staff is a key element for all HEIs in the context of the internal quality system (National Forum for Enhancement of teaching and learning in Higher Education, 2015).

With both a national and European report acknowledging the need for teaching and learning professionals in higher education to have certified pedagogical training, it is worth asking what purpose unaccredited professional development in this area will achieve. It appears it would serve a complimentary rather than central role to an eventual need for certified courses to be readily available to all teaching and learning professionals in higher education.

2.6 Developments in Ireland:

Ireland was highlighted alongside the UK, Belgium, and the Netherlands as a leading example of a country taking steps towards implementing national policy initiatives in the area of professionalising teaching (European Science Foundation, 2012). A recent development in Ireland is the move to performance based funding for higher education institutions through the use of institutional compacts. This has arisen directly from the National Strategy for Higher Education 2030 (Hunt 2011) in the creation of national priorities and key objectives of Government for higher education. Indeed, the development of these institutional compacts will be a key tool in assessing the progress of each institution in addressing these objectives. Specifically:

> Each institution has now entered into a compact with the HEA, undertaking how it will contribute to national objectives from the position of its particular mission and strengths. The compacts provide for how performance is to be measured and a proportion of funding will, in future years, be contingent on performance (HEA, 2014:9).

Within the first system performance report a number of objectives are identified. System objective 3 refers to "excellence in teaching and learning to underpin a high quality student experience" (HEA 2014:18).

The creation of the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education in 2012 was identified in the report as a step towards the development of the teaching and learning experience offered to our students' here (HEA 2014). The forum outline this will be done through a combination of methods including, developing teachers and learnings, inspiring

great practice, benchmarking best practice in professional development and building e-learning capacity (National Forum 2015).

As a portion of funding in future years may be contingent on each institutions performance in their compacts in relation to these objectives, it would be expected that they will need to focus on the development of the pedagogical skills of their academic staff.

Summary: On the basis of developments both nationally and abroad the timing of this piece of research is particularly relevant in the on-going discussion of the teaching and learning experience afforded to students in Ireland. Exploring the range and breadth of unaccredited CPD offered to teaching and learning professionals in Ireland will allow us to create an accurate picture of the current standing of opportunities available for our academic staff. Understanding the culture and practice among teaching and learning professionals in this area will also allow us to see what success or difficulties any moves towards certification of pedagogical knowledge may have in the Irish context. With a pre-existing appetite both nationally and on a European level to move in this direction, the role unaccredited CPD will hold in this framework remains to be determined. However on the basis of identifying its methods of implementation and of the range of courses offered this report should contribute to any future discussions in this area.

3.0 - Research Design

This project utilised a mixed methodology approach through a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to collect data from a number of sources of evidence. This approach was adopted to support the emergence of convergences in findings to addressing this projects specified research questions (Yin, 2009). A range of relevant stakeholders involved in the provision and uptake of unaccredited CPD training in higher education were consulted across a representative sample of higher education institutions in the Republic of Ireland. The relevant stakeholders consulted comprised teaching and learning professionals across a range of disciplinary domains and management personnel involved in the co-ordination or planning of unaccredited CPD training across a range of higher education institutions.

3.1 - Participant Selection across Higher Education Institutions:
The sample of participants selected for this study comprised all seven Irish Universities, a sample of six Institutes of Technology that were selected such that that they were representative of the geographic spread and organisational structures of the Institute of technology sector in general. Finally, the Higher Education Colleges Association (HECA) were consulted to ascertain the range and strategic approach adopted within this sector toward the provision of unaccredited CPD training.

Overall, this project was comprised of two discrete stages that will now be outlined in detail.

3.2 - Phase 1:

This initial phase of the research aimed to explore the breadth, depth and typologies of provision of unaccredited CPD training across a sample of higher education institutions. It also explored whether there was a strategic plan in place to guide institutional provision of unaccredited CPD and what levels of review and oversight are utilised in the sourcing of providers and uptake from within the institutions staff of teaching and learning professionals.

3.2.1 - Participants:

A purposive expert sampling approach was adopted in the recruitment of participants for this phase such that learning and development officers (LDOs) within the human resources offices of the sample institutions would be contacted. This approach was used as it elicited the views of persons who have specific expertise in the targeted area being studied (Trochim, 2006). These individuals were selected as their role is directly concerned with the development or delivery of unaccredited CPD training. Where there was an issue regarding the availability of a learning and development officer within a particular institution, the research team requested the institution nominate another suitably qualified individual to fulfil this role.

3.2.2 - Methodology:

This phase utilised a mixed methodology approach through a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to collect data from the learning and development officer participants.

Firstly, the quantitative element involved the design and administration of an online survey using the Survey Monkey programme which was initially sent to participants. This survey gathered preliminary information from each participant regarding unaccredited CPD strategy and provision within their institution. This allowed necessary adjustments to be made to the qualitative approach in following interviews completed within each institution. Survey Monkey was suitable as it has features to aid in the data analysis phase and ensures greater rigour in the accuracy of the findings. The ordinal data was collated and converted into suitable visual depictions to effectively represent the information into suitable graph form. Content analysis (Hseih and Shannon 2005) was employed with the open-ended questions to identify common themes and patterns. A further intended was that the scales used and the demographics obtained may increase the reliability of the conclusions (Biemer and Lyberg, 2003) of this research.

Secondly, individual audio-taped face-to-face semi-structured interviews with the Learning and Development Officers were carried out to provide deeper, contextual information on the management and delivery of unaccredited CPD within their particular institution. This qualitative data was coded and analysed according to Braun and Clarke's framework (2012). The aim at the outset was that phase 1 would comprise the dissemination of fifteen questionnaires and the conducting of 15 semi-structured interviews with LDO's (or designated institutional representatives).

The initially survey disseminated to the institutional LDO representatives would request they identify particular disciplinary groups within their institutions who actively participate in unaccredited CPD, either through delivery of CPD to others or through participation in domains specific programmes of CPD themselves. The research team then contacted these identified groups and requested they participate in phase 2 of this research project.

3.3 - Phase 2:

This phase of the research adopted a qualitative orientation to the exploration of the culture and practice regarding participation in unaccredited CPD among Teaching and Learning Professionals across the range of disciplinary groupings. This interpretivist orientation was felt to be appropriate for conducting this phase of the research as it views data as "culturally saturated and that the opinions or beliefs people hold cannot be divorced from their socialisation, environment, and experiences" (Geary & Mannix-McNamara, 2007:342). As such, it is particularly suited to exploring the effect of disciplinary beliefs, intentions and cultures have on professionals' participation in CPD training.

Previous research has identified eight disciplinary groupings that regularly participate in teaching and learning CPD within higher educational settings in Ireland. These disciplinary groupings are;

- Education and training,
- Arts & Humanitites,
- Social science, Business and Law
- Science, Maths, Computing,
- Engineering, Manufacturing & Construction,
- Health and Welfare,
- Others.

This second phase of the research initially aimed to conduct 12 focus groups across the disciplinary domains in order to explore what forms of CPD training members of these groupings participate in or offer to others? It also sought to investigate why they participate in CPD and how frequent was their participation? Participants were also asked, based on current participation patterns and provision, what unaccredited CPD training needs might be identified for teaching and learning professionals in the future?

3.3.1 - Participants:

This phase also used a non-proportional snowball sampling approach to the selection of participants (Trochim, 2006), whereby the research team approached the disciplinary groupings identified within particular institutions by the Learning and Development officer participants from Phase one. A contact individual was asked to provide the names of other members of the particular groupings or nominate other members to participate in a focus group. It is hoped these participants would be willing to take part and provide information by virtue of their knowledge in the area (Lewis & Sheppard, 2006)

3.3.2 – Methodology:

A focus group approach was chosen for the collection of data on the views, attitudes and culture among teaching and learning professionals toward unaccredited CPD training. This approach was chosen as it has been shown to produce results that have high face validity (Kreugar 1994) and allows the researcher to probe participant's opinions in detail and explore unanticipated issues that may arise (Stewart & Shamdasani 1990). From a methodological standpoint, focus groups may also expose respondents to the views of the other participants, thus creating an environment conducive to dialogue and group interaction (Maycock & Byrne, 2004). As such, focus groups also give the

researchers the chance to discover the needs, feelings, perceptions and attitudes of their participant through the group interaction (Holloway & Wheeler, 2010).

This phase of the research aimed to complete a total of 12 focus groups, each comprising six - eight participants, all drawn from the same subject discipline. Each of the focus groups was audio recorded and then later transcribed.

Two approaches were used to increase the credibility and the trustworthiness of the current research and minimise any concerns regarding researcher bias within the analysis of the current data. One is triangulation which assumes that if two or more sources of data, theoretical frameworks, types of data collected, or researchers converge on the same conclusion, then the conclusion is more credible (Denzin, 1978). As data in the current research was collect across multiple institutions and from multiple participants within each institution, the multi-vocality inherent within this approach lent validity to the data that emerged. Secondly, Member Reflections were also be used to enhance qualitative credibility by "taking findings back to the field and determining whether the participants recognize them as true or accurate" (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002:242). This would control for any potential researcher bias in several different ways and would offer participants opportunities for questions, critique, feedback, affirmation, and even collaboration. The provision of space and the option for member reflections would also provide opportunities for additional data and elaboration that would enhance the credibility of the emerging analysis (Tracey, 2010).

3.4 – Data Analysis:

3.4.1 - Phase 1:
Phase 1 of this project comprised conducting a minor survey (Appendix A) with each of the institutions to collect preliminary information from each of them regarding unaccredited bearing CPD. This allowed necessary adjustments to be made to the qualitative approach in later interviews based off the particulars of each institution. Once this has been completed in each institution descriptive data analysis were conducted on the surveys using IBM SPSS Statistics 20 on the sample to provide an overall synopsis of unaccredited CPD in their institution.

To explore the research questions in the finer detail required, a thematic analysis was conducted on the interviews (Appendix B) which took place upon visiting each institution. This qualitative data was coded and analysed according to Braun and Clarke's framework (2012). This framework consists of a six phase approach:

> Phase 1: Familiarizing yourself with the Data
> Phase 2: Generating initial codes
> Phase 3: Searching for themes
> Phase 4: Reviewing potential themes
> Phase 5: Defining and naming themes
> Phase 6: Producing the report

This framework was applied to the interviews conducted in each institution allowing the exploration in great detail of research questions 1 & 2, allowing the identification of common threads across each institution.

3.4.2 - Phase 2:

Focus groups (Appendix C) within the eight disciplinary groupings were conducted as part of this phase. Braun and Clarke's (2012) framework for thematic analysis was again utilised as it allowed the research team to systematically identify, organise and explore themes across the dataset. This will provided the necessary data to answer research questions 3 & 4 while also contributing to questions 1 & 2.

3.5 – Ethical considerations:

Ethics approval for the study was granted by the University of Limerick Faculty of Education and Health Sciences' Research Ethics Committee. This project also received ethical approval from the Research Ethics Group of the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. There were certain ethical principles that were held as inviolable throughout the research process. These were beneficence (that the research do good and/or achieve benefit for participants), non-maleficence (that the research do no harm) and the autonomy of persons (that participants rights and freedoms are at all times honoured). All participants were given information sheets clearly delineating the research parameters and expectations and outlining the freedom to decline participation or to withdraw at any stage without prejudice. Careful attention has been given to protecting the anonymity of participants and research locations.

4.0 – Results

Overview: The mixed method approach to conducting this program of research yielded a wealth of data that provided a snapshot of the experiences of a sample of stakeholders working within the higher education sector in Ireland. The intention of this section the current report is report both the qualitative and quantitative results that emerged and frame them such that they address the five research questions outlined in the introduction of the report. The research questions targeted by the research were;

1 – What ranges and typologies of unaccredited CPD training are being offered for teaching and learning staff within Higher Education sectors in the Rep of Ireland?

2 – What is the uptake of unaccredited CPD among teaching and learning professionals in Higher Education and from which discipline/professional groupings do they come?

3 – What is the culture and practice among teaching and learning professionals regarding unaccredited CPD participation and activity?

4 - What are the practical outcomes of participating in the CPD among teaching and learning professionals within Higher Education in Ireland.

5 - Based on current participation patterns and provision, what unaccredited CPD training needs might be identified for teaching and learning professionals in the future?

The first two sections of the results, Sections 4.1 and 4.2 provide detailed contextual results that will support the results reported and discussed in later sections. While the initial two sections do not explicitly address particular research questions, they provide detail essential for a holistic understanding of the data from the later sections.

Section 4.1 provides an overview of strategic aims that aims that underpin the selection of content for unaccredited CPD across the sample of participating HEIs. These appear to align closely with the Strategic plans for the particular institutions. In particular student engagement and student retention were targeted, as was staff development .

Institutional Structures are addressed in section 4.2, which outlined the complexity and diversity across the sample of participating HEIs of organisational structures that underpinned provisions of CPD . The important role that institutional structure played in how unaccredited CPD is sourced, designed and delivered was emphasised. In particular the importance of clear institutional strategic planning was emphasised in supporting the visible importance of engagement with CPD within institutions. From the perspective off LDOs. Strategic plans and budgetary allocations were very important in guidance of development of Unaccredited CPD provision. However, there was a lack of clarity regarding the role unaccredited CPD occupied across the sample of participating institutions, with it fulfilling a different and largely informal roles across the sample .There was also diversity across the sample in how accredited and unaccredited CPD were separated of linked across the sample. Both of these points led to different values being ascribed to engagement in unaccredited

CPD and different levels of participation from academic staff. The development of collaborations, both within the institutions themselves and across institutions was also identified as important.

In Section 4.4. a clear outline of the range and topographies of the unaccredited CPD is provided drawn from the data contributed by LDOs from across the sample, thus providing significant detail regarding the first research question. Specifically, five thematic areas emerged from the range of unaccredited CPD courses being offered across the sample of higher education institutions. These were are represented in Fig. 3 of this report which also give a clear outline of proportional representation of each of the themes across the sample. The themes are as follows;

- Digital Capacity
- Assessment
- Pedagogy
- Academic Development
- Curriculum Design

A more detail breakdown of the different subcategories of course within each of these thematic areas is provided. There is also significant detail regarding the ways in which unaccredited CPD is delivered and the impact the intended audience has on the selection or design CPD.

Regarding research question 2, Section 4.4 outlines the data collected regarding to the monitoring of participation in unaccredited CPD among the participating sample of institutions. While ten of the twelve participating institution reported maintaining records regarding participation in unaccredited CPD events, the approach taken varied significantly across that sample. In most cases records of attendance were kept to quantify numbers in attendance but in some cases attendance at unaccredited CPD is recorded in individual's personal file. In one instance attendance at these programmes is also sent to HR. Attendance varied from one institution to another and across course being offered. However, no LDO's were in a position to provide detailed quantitative data regarding the categories or disciplinary groupings in attendance at events, or which disciplinary groupings were more active than others.

Research question 3 was addressed in Section 4.5 that explored the culture and practice of engagement with CPD across the sample of institutions. This comprised qualitative data that emerged from interviews with LDOs and focus groups conducted with teaching and learning professionals from across a range of disciplines. The perspective that emerged was one that viewed higher education as a domain that in transition and experiencing significant changes of culture.

A number of categories of influential factors emerged has having an impact on the culture of engagement with unaccredited CPD across the higher education institutions. These included;

- *external factors,*
- *internal factors,*
- *local and departmental influences,*
- *limiting factors,*

Of particular importance in influencing engagement were external factors such as European and national strategic policy in Higher education. Documents like the European Standards and Guidelines

and the objectives outlined in the Hunt report influenced the targets identified in the strategic plans of individual institutions. These policies also influenced the development of institutional collaborations and initiatives and how they interacted with the HEA. Additionally, industrial relations reforms such as the Croke Park Agreement and the Haddington Road Agreement impacted explicitly on the working conditions of staff within higher education. International ranking rubrics for universities were also felt to influence the values or metrics targeted by universities, however, research activities were often felt to be more explicitly emphasised in such measures.

These *external factors* were then identified as influencing *internal factors* within particular institutions that had an impact on the culture of engagement among staff. This was particularly the case for factors such as institutional strategic plans, programmatic reviews and metrics selected and weighted during performance reviews that impacted on staff progression. The role of Head of Department was identified as being of central importance in fostering a culture of engagement and participation with CPD. The role of head of department provided a bridge between top-down institutional forces and needs identified by departments in meeting the needs of their course or personal development aspirations of staff. This was especially the case in supporting the individual interests and developmental aspirations of individual staff members. A range of suggested supports to foster the development of a peer supportive network within departments and between staff are suggested also. However, a range of limiting factors is also discussed that have an impact on staff willingness, motivation or ability to engage with CPD participation. In some cases, this phenomenon may link closely with previously discussed factors.

The data that emerges from section 4.6 provides a rich picture of what the practical outcomes of engaging with CPD are for staff in higher education. This directly addresses research question 4 of this study and shows that there are both positive and negative views on the practical outcomes of unaccredited CPD. Disciplinary professionals from within the focus groups emphasised the value of participating in unaccredited CPD due to its practice focussed and specific learning objectives. This lends an aspect of utility toward practical application of skills acquired during such CPD that led directly toward impacts on teaching and learning practice. However, there was also a time cost to participating in training or delivering CPD that staff in higher education felt drew them away from other aspect of their job, such as participation in research for example.

The final research question is addressed in section 4.7, Future directions and suggestions to improve the offerings of unaccredited CPD. This section includes a range of suggestion from both LDO participants and also from across the teaching and learning professionals from within the disciplinary groupings. The suggested initiatives, changes or developments are reported across three thematic categories;

- At a National Level
- At an Institutional Level
- At a Professional disciplinary Level

 National reforms such as the provision of a national framework that would allow a flexible route toward accrediting engagement with currently unaccredited forms of CPD was identified as important. Emphasis was placed on such a framework being flexible and self-guided by teaching and learning professionals with a portfolio approach being suggested. Initiatives to support inter-

institutional collaboration were also emphasised, as were suggests regarding how the HEA allocated funding to support engagement with unaccredited CPD.

From the perspective of institutional supports for engagement with unaccredited CPD, recognition of engagement with unaccredited CPD being actively and practically supported was emphasised. While there may be references to teaching and learning CPD targeting within institutional strategic plans, participants referenced the importance of practice supports such as crediting engagement with CPD in the metrics of performance reviews and progression assessment for academic was emphasised. Some teaching and learning professionals suggested engagement with CPD should be mandated within academics professional contracts also, thought this was contested.

Finally, at a professional level, it was suggested that exiting models of how professional bodies across a range of disciplines supported engagement with on-going CPD might inform approaches to encouraging teaching and learning CPD in higher education. Some suggested provision of non-mandatory guidelines would be most appropriate, while other referenced statutory regulation of accredited training in other sectors of Irish education and suggested a similar approach would be a more appropriate for higher education.

4.1. – Overarching Aims of Unaccredited CPD

A number of different aims and goals emerged from discussion with Learning Development Officers (LDOs) from across the sample of participating institutions. In the responses from the surveys conducted prior to the interview, these aims or goals were informed or closely tied to targeted objectives within the institutions strategic plans. In other words, these aims for the provision of unaccredited CPD represented an overarching and long term goal of the provision of CPD. This section will briefly outline some of the main influences that informed the identified aims from across the sample. These fall into the categories of optimising student experience, maximising student retention, and the upskilling professional development of teaching and learning staff.

Student Experience: Quite often the goal would relate to the ultimate impact on the learning experience for students through the development of the teaching staff. The area that was particularly targeted was developing the teaching and learning competencies among staff as this was hoped to impact on students learning experiences while attending courses at the institutions. "Student engagement. That's what our whole strategic plan is about" (LDO 1).

Indeed, three of the participating Universities within the sample recognise the need for teaching and learning professionals to regularly up-skill in new technologies and pedagogies so that the expectations and needs of their learners can be met.

> "Our main focus is supporting staff and enhancing the student experience. So … it's kind of just trying to get people engaged and seeing that they need to develop in the discipline that is teaching and learning" (LDO 4)

Student retention: Student engagement and retention were recurring aims cited by the LDOs. It was felt that CPD was an important part of working towards greater student engagement. A greater level of engagement was specifically identified within institutional strategic plans as centrally important for increasing student retention.

"Keeping students engaged, retention of students in the system and making the learning experience for people who may struggle academically far more enjoyable and empowering them to participate" (LDO 2)

Given that student retention is also specifically identified as a performance target and measured performance metric for higher education institutions in Ireland following the publication of the Hunt report (2011), this is perhaps not surprising. Higher education institutions are offered financial 'incentives' to meet targets in areas such as the retention of students, the rate of course completion, increasing access to college, and teaching standards. Indeed, should they fail to meet these targets, they will face financial penalties.

Staff development: Some of the LDOs reported that their institutions prioritised staff development as a central plank of their aims for CPD provision. "Our role in a very broad sense is to support and to encourage academic staff to become better teachers and that's more or less it" (LDO 11). In particular, the development of critical thinking and reflective practice in relation to teaching in learning, and that Higher Education staff would grow to see themselves as practitioners of teaching and learning. Ultimately, the goal here is to support the development of academic staff to be *"better teachers"* and *"empowering them to really think"* (LDO 6).

Some LDOs spoke about providing a suitable environment and space for staff to *"perform but also take opportunities to enhance their teaching"* (LDO 3) but it was also evident that, for some at least, CPD provided an opportunity for monitoring or *"checking the temperature gauge on teaching"* (LDO 1) where *"…get people thinking about what they're doing and reflecting on their practice on a much deeper way"* (LDO 2)

> *"We want them to be reflective, to be mindful and ultimately to be scholarly. To be inquirers if you'd call it… that they would inquire through teaching, that they would problematise it. But it is also about building the confidence and repertoire of the staff that they're able to speak the language of teaching and learning and maybe problematise their teaching and they design curriculum well"* (LDO 6)

Summary: Across the sample of participating institutions, the overarching aims of unaccredited CPD are intrinsically tied to the institutional strategic plans, which are themselves explicitly influenced by the national policies for higher education in Ireland. The three thematic areas that emerged were improving student experience, increasing student retention and developing staff. Given that these three thematic areas are linked very closely to performance metrics specified within the Hunt report for allocation of funding to higher education institutions, it is perhaps understandable that these are strategically targeted in institutional plans. CPD in the teaching and learning, inclusive of unaccredited CPD, appears to be identified as a way of supporting the achievement of these strategic goals. As such, CPD in teaching and learning has a role in meet both strategic objectives and supporting access to ongoing funding for the higher education institutions from within the participating sample.

4.2 - Institutional Structures

Introduction: There were a variety of institutional structures underpinning the planning and provision of Unaccredited CPD across the sample of higher education institutions in this study. These differing structures led to different practical outcomes in how CPD was delivered and viewed by staff

within the particular institutions. This section will outline the main themes that emerged regarding institutional structures. These included complex structures for the delivery of CPD, budgetary considerations across differing structures, a lack of coordination in CPD provision, and, finally, the utilisation of collaborations in CPD provision.

4.2.1 - Structures
Complex Structures:

Institutional structures for the organisation and provision of CPD vary greatly across institutions. The majority of institutions (n=10) identified that there is either an individual or group that has responsibility for the co-ordination and provision of CPD. In relation to the provision of teaching and learning unaccredited CPD, the ten institutions have teaching/learning/assessment groups in the form of committees/centres/units. Some of these have overall responsibility for that specific type of CPD while others provide direction to someone in a specific role with responsibility for the delivery of CPD.

In some institutions there were no dedicated centres with specific responsibility for sourcing, designing and delivering CPD. Instead these institutions may only have a small number of staff who assigned some of their time to this role. This leads to a feeling amongst some staff and LDOs that *"there isn't a structured oversight of it all"* (LDO 10)*.*

None of these individuals or centres had overall responsibility for CPD provision across the entire organisation. Different aspects of CPD are delivered across differing functions of the institution. Specifically, there were four areas identified where responsibility for delivering Unaccredited CPD were reported to lie. These included

1. Human Resources;
2. Specific committees/centres/individuals;
3. Individual schools;
4. Independent departments which would include for example Libraries and IT Divisions.

Each of these differing areas of responsibility for the delivery of unaccredited CPD each had their own strategic remit and may have been targeting differing particular audiences for their training workshops.

Budgetary considerations: The knock-on impact of complex and multiple facets of some institutional systems for the delivery of CPD were that each sector may be operating with its own separate budget. Sometimes responsibility is shared with the LDO and other persons or departments but not with any planned structure or division of labour; rather it is a consequence of navigating budgetary or institutional political realities. In practical terms, this may have led to some forms of Unaccredited CPD being delivered by multiple providers within the same institution. However, it was evident that, at least in some institutions, there was overlap and duplication occurring between these different providers.

These budgetary and practical demarcations between departments were sometime seen as an impediment that slows the planning and delivery of CPD and are *"…structural issues there that make it difficult to make breakthroughs"* (LDO 2). In addition, these demarcations may prevent

collaborations and synergies developing between different departments within the one institution. Some LDOs felt that these structures prevent them doing things they would like to because it *"would be stepping on sooo many toes"* (LDO 1).

Lack of coordination: From the perspective of staff, many felt that guidance on the coordination and structuring of Unaccredited CPD "…*needs to be coming from the top down, the plan needs to be there and the support structures need to be there*" (FG3-P3). In the absence of a coherent focus to CPD strategy and architecture for delivery of Unaccredited training staff noted regular contact where "those emails come out very frequently in terms of what's been offered" (FG1-P1) but "there is a tension there as well and you'll find that the CPD then becomes something then that's optional" (FG2-P1)

An approach of providing specified responsibilities for CPD that were apportioned to staff who received an agreed number of hours reduction in teaching load was an approach seen across the majority of the Institutes of technology in the sample. However, the reduction in teaching hours given to such coordinators were in the region of three or four hours per week but LDOs felt restricted in this regard because they say *"you don't get much done with four hours"* (LDO 2).

Across the focus groups and interviews, staff members within the institutions reported that they felt having a coordinated approach to supporting provision of Unaccredited CPD was important for supporting engagement from staff.

> *"…I think it's just you do need somebody to organise you because you don't have time so you need somebody who has that role...yeah if you can tell someone your needs"* (FG1-P4)

4.4.2 - Strategy

Learning and Development Officer Perspective: All LDOs made some reference to strategy during their interview. Nine institutions have identified that they have specific plans in place for the provision of CPD for teaching and learning professionals in their institution. Of these, three universities recognise the need for regular up-skilling in new technologies and pedagogies so that the expectations and needs of their learners can be met. The focus in this instance relies on providing opportunities for their staff to engage in continued professional development programmes in these areas but also in research and academics.

Six institutes of technology stated that that they possess a strategic plan. Of these, three identify a combination of "Teaching/Learning/Assessment Strategies" which exist within their institutions for the purposes of CPD provision. The other institution identified it as a specific project within a key section of their institutions strategic plan. Their focus is largely similar to that of the universities in that they are up-skilling their staff through provision of CPD, in some cases offering both unaccredited and accredited professional development opportunities. One institution has a specific strategic plan document in place for staff training and development.

Two of the institutions that responded indicated that they didn't have a specific strategic plan in place for CPD suggested that this was addressed more generally within their institutions overall strategic plan. In other words, while it was not explicitly targeted, their view was that the institutional strategic plans supported indirectly the need for teaching professionals to be provided with opportunities to develop professionally in the area of teaching and learning. One of these

institutions also highlighted their Teaching/Learning/Assessment Strategy in that it provides for the provision of CPD. Indeed, most LDOs stated that their plan was focused on Learning, Teaching and Assessment, with only a small number moving beyond this to mention "*student engagement*" (LDO 1, 2), "*retention*" (LDO 2), and "*technology*" (LDO 8).

In contrast, however, another LDO said that their strategic targets involved "*the idea of the teacher as researcher and a scholar…you know not just if you like it's not a remediation model in that sense*" (LDO 6) and in this same vain another stated that "*engaging in the scholarship… [and] research led teaching is at the core of it as well*" (LDO 9). Yet, other LDOs who noted a lack clarity where "*in terms of strategy, it's not very tight*" (LDO 4) and that many "*use the word strategy loosely… I'd say making it up as we go along*" (LDO 7). This highlights a degree of variance across the sample with regard to CPD aims and strategies.

What is clear throughout the majority of the sample is that, despite variance between what each institution self-identified as a strategic plan for CPD, there was an acknowledged need for CPD to be provided. However, the specifics by which this identified provision of CPD could be achieved are not identified or explored. Rather CPD is identified as being part of a process by which a larger goal can be achieved (for example increasing student engagement, or improving teaching and learning practices within the institution). The overwhelming focus was therefore on what type of CPD was provided rather than on how CPD will be provided for.

Academic Staff Perspective: The perspectives of participating teaching and learning professionals was sharply contrasting with many aspects of the LDO's perspective. In particular, the details pertaining to specific strategic aims, goals or targets and the impact of these were not always reported as evident by staff during focus groups. This lack of strategic clarity was noted by staff across the institutions, some of whom said that "*there is no formal plan and I don't think you'll find one anywhere actually … in any of the other departments* (FG2-P1). This lack of clarity was perceived negatively by participating staff. They felt that engagement with CPD "... *needs to be coming from the top down*" (FG3–P3) because "*if you don't have a strategy from the top...*" (FG3–P2) then CPD provision becomes disorganised, unfocused and "*tends to be done on an ad hoc basis*" (FG2-P1).

Staff did note that CPD in a more general sense was addressed in some institutions overall strategic plans. However, overall strategic plans were more diverse in their aims and objective, tending to target a range of outcomes.   Objectives such as "*increase[ing] internationalisation by 30%*...*increas[ing] our ISI publications by something else*…*increase[ing] student retention*" (FG2-P2) and others were highlighted by participants and CPD was understood to be required to fit within this spectrum of strategic aspirations. However, some staff suggested that their institutions placed greater emphasis on accredited training achievements within their strategic plans;

> "*The main CPD that this institution is looking for, based on the current strategic plan, is a PhD and research… I don't know that there is any form of policy around Unaccredited CPD, it just happens as a parallel… It's ad hoc*" (FG3-P1).

In other words, academic staff engaged in teaching and learning across some of the participating institutions felt that engagement with CPD was not as important a focus of institutional strategic plans as were other identified strategic targets.

"I don't think its front and centre in anyone's consciousness…So how important is it on a scale of 1-10 I'd say about somewhere between 3 and 2 in terms of where it is on the agenda." (FG2-P1)

4.4.3 - Role of CPD

<u>Addressing Arising Needs:</u> One important role fulfilled by Unaccredited CPD provision across the sample of higher education institutions was in meeting specific needs or forming part of solutions to addressing particular problems that arose in a flexible way. This was in meeting the needs of particular courses being offered, needs within particular departments, or across the institutions more generally. Institutions availed of the flexibility and scope Unaccredited CPD offered in addressing a range of needs as they arose. Often its implementation was discussed as depending on *"whatever particular fire is going on"* (FG1-P1) at any particular moment in time as an ad hoc provision.

> *"[Unaccredited CPD] doesn't really have a specifically defined role…a lot of the time I suspect that we do a lot of mopping up to be honest"* (LDO 11)

Certainly a view was expressed by some LDOs that role of CPD is not specifically defined, largely informal, and often not planned with the same rigor as its accredited counterparts.

<u>Developing linkages and collaborations:</u> However, the informality of the Unaccredited was seen as an advantage in creating a supportive 'community of practice'. The informality and flexibility afforded by Unaccredited CPD provision allowed it to be responsive to the needs of particular staff and react to common goals within groups. This allowed the simultaneous advantage of supporting communication and networks to develop among staff.

> *"A kind of a strong support community for each other… that is one of the great advantages of the lunchtime sessions and, often, the serendipitous [nature] of the Unaccredited … d'you know because people just drop in"* (LDO 6)

<u>Career Progression:</u> In some institutions LDOs felt Unaccredited CPD was valued in career progression. In some cases this was noted for engagement with informal Unaccredited forms of CPD such as *"...peer observation because they need it for a progression or they need it to demonstrate [it]"* (LDO 1). However, other LDOs noted that staff felt compelled to engage with certain forms of Unaccredited CPD *"...because certainly in our promotion system now. For example you can't get promoted to senior lecturer without a teaching portfolio"* (LDO 6). Such perspective emphasis a particularly instrumental or functional motivation among staff for engaging in Unaccredited CPD tied to personal career progression. However, not all participants believed that CPD, credited or not, played a significant role in progression:

> *"There's no value to the credits... In terms of promotion or securing new position, the credits aren't really worth anything from what I can see. So therefore credit or non-credit wouldn't make a difference to me personally"* (FG2-P4)

4.4.4 – Links between Accredited & Unaccredited CPD

The position of Unaccredited CPD relative to Accredited CPD varied from institution to institution. In one case Unaccredited CPD was the only form of provision at present, while in some other institutions, where both types are provided, the Unaccredited was described as being *"probably more common than accredited"* (LDO 1).

A slight majority of institutions identified links between Unaccredited and Accredited CPD or other forms of training. Links between Accredited and Unaccredited CPD were primarily based on the idea that individuals could undertake modules from accredited programmes without actually being enrolled for assessment and accreditation. Of those that did not identify links, one institution highlighted that they do plan to do this in line with the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education CPD framework consultation. However, some institutions used Unaccredited CPD only as a means for getting people to take accredited programmes.

> *"our main focus is on accredited now…For us we see it [Unaccredited CPD] as a way in to the accredited. We're always pushing that!…I just think that the value and the impact of that is far greater"* (LDO 3)

While some staff felt that there was significant value in Unaccredited CPD, a number of LDOs reported that they were moving more toward emphasising Accredited CPD more heavily because, systematically and culturally, *"the accredited thing sort of took over more"* (LDO 6). In fact, some institutions had moved toward mandating participation in accredited CPD for all staff who joined the institution whereby *"…all new academic staff... actually have to undertake the Diploma in Third Level Learning and teaching. So that's accredited"* (LDO 8)

4.4.5 - Collaboration

There are two types of collaboration which came to the fore during interviews with LDOs. The first is internal collaboration, which refers to the discussion of collaboration within the individual institutions. External, then, refers to discussion of collaboration that occurs between institutions or with individuals outside of the institution.

4.4.5.1 - Internal

Internally sourcing CPD: Internally, there are, again, two types of collaboration which were discussed. Firstly, LDOs spoke about the collaboration with teaching faculty that leads to the provision of CPD by utilising people from within the teaching staff who have been identified as experts or champions in a particular area.

> *"…we have a very small academic development unit. So we tend to use a lot of our colleagues both within the institution who would have… a research interest in a certain area of teaching and learning"* (LDO 9)

Secondly, LDOs also spoke of their collaborations with other offices or sections within their institution for the sourcing and provision of CPD. As previously discussed, this would mainly impact at the planning or budgetary stage of sourcing CPD. Generally, LDOs were highlighting that only tentative links are presented between these offices, if any. Some LDOs acknowledged that these offices, like HR for example, *"had their own remit"* (LDO 10), and may be targeting a different

audience. However, other LDOs felt that "*there could be an alignment there between what's actually been offered*" (LDO 1).

'Bottom-up' influences: However, it was also noted that, in some circumstances, learning and development officers or departments collaborated in a "bottom up" way with different departments across the particular institution. While this might apply to both Accredited and Unaccredited CPD training development, it was felt to be particularly evident for Unaccredited provision. In such circumstances *"... someone, individually, might identify something outside the institute that they have seen and that they might like to go to you" (*FG3-P2). In this way centres for teaching and learning or LDO's acted as link through which staff could influence CPD provision within their institution.

> "*There would be a positive disposition to staff identifying individual CPD. Because it would all fit into staff professional development*" (FG3-P1)

Developing links and networks: Staff also noted that the links and collaborations that were generated through participating with internally sourced CPD supported informal channels of training and development within institutions. Peer support networks were felt to be a valuable and necessary structure that needed further development:

> "*…we maybe could do peer teaching and support – I'm just thinking in terms of supporting one another*" (FG1-P2)

With regard to sourcing external providers, internal collaborations and mixing of a "top-down" and "bottom-up" approach to provision were also noted where staff suggested that *"if you all come together you get more purchasing power and financially it would be easier"* (FG2-P2).

4.4.5.2 - External

Most LDOs described that they are *"very open to talking and collaborating with people"* (LDO 11) but the extent to which it happens nationally was not very clear. One institution clearly identified that they do not collaborate with other institutions. There are certainly many LDOs who bring in academics from other institutions to deliver CPD. Some institutions did highlight the importance of talking to other people in other institutions but most don't have formal collaborative arrangements.

> "*It's really important to talk to people in other institutions to see what they're doing and likewise and bring in expertise both ways… I mean it's nothing formal… know, we've had people from all over, universities and IoTs, who have come and delivered CPD for us*" (LDO 4)

Collaboration between institutions primarily occurs within pre-defined groups or organisations, such as *"LIN",* "*EDIN Educational Developers Ireland Network*", the "*Shannon consortium"* as well as *"…kind of Ed-Tech conferences, they are all around teaching and learning in the third level sector*" (FG1–P3). However, the reported levels of engagement with external collaborations across institutions appeared to be mixed.

> "*Within the IOT sector and there are a number of modules which are accredited nationally called LIN modules… But the uptake on them is actually inconsistent. In some places it's very very good where there is, maybe, a centre of teaching and learning and it really really*

pushes them and promotes them across department. Other places then it's a bit more hit and miss" (FG1-P6)

Establishing links with other institutions, other disciplinary groupings and organisations was also identified to be a positive support of staff confidence and development, particularly when comparing and contrasting practices.

"Because when you bring in an outsider and you think 'okay, I'm not a million miles off'…You're validated." (FG3-P1)

Summary: This summary outlined some of the main thematic findings to emerge regarding the institutional structures that underpinned the provision of Unaccredited CPD across the sample of institutions. While this section does not specifically address any of the research questions, it provides important contextual information for later sections that do directly address particular research questions.

An important finding was that there was significant diversity in institutional structures across the sample and that there was often significant complexity in the organisation and provision of CPD. Ten institutions in the sample clarified that they had designated responsibilities for the design and delivery of CPD. The majority of institutes of technology had individuals who were responsible for CPD, whereas, many of the universities had designated centres for teaching and learning, often comprising of multiple staff. LDOs also identified that other offices and organisations within the institutions also had responsibility and budgets for CPD delivery. This division of labour sometimes led to issues with coordination, funding and replication of CPD.

Institutional strategic plans were identified as being very important in guiding provision of Unaccredited CPD. Nine of the participating institutions had specific strategic plans to support CPD in the area of teaching and learning. However, the specific reference to engagement with CPD and how it was being monitored was viewed as unclear by both LDOs interviewed and staff within disciplinary groups. Teaching and learning professionals also appeared to by unclear or unsure regarding the content of strategically plans in the area of teaching and learning, leading to the perception that it was not being coordinated. This 'loose' and unclear strategic approach was seen by staff as an implicit message regarding the importance that institutions place on engagement with CPD. This was perceived to be in strong contrast with the very specific and metric driven approach adopted toward other strategic targets, such as research output. This had a knock on impact on staff who felt that they needed to focus on other aspects of their role in order to foster their own career progression.

There also appeared to be a lack of clarity about the role of Unaccredited CPD in the sample of HEIs in this study. The flexibility derived from this lack of clarity often led to LDO's reporting that Unaccredited CPD was used to 'mop-up' or address 'particular fires' or needs that emerged. Links between Accredited and Unaccredited CPD were evident, where Accredited CPD modules could be taken without enrolling for accreditation and thus being considered to be Unaccredited CPD. In other cases, Unaccredited CPD was seen as a way of recruit staff or get 'buy in' for Accredited courses. However, it was also reported that the flexibility and informality of Unaccredited CPD was important for creating informal internal communities of practice, support networks and collaborations.

External collaborations were also discussed, but were often not formalised. Instead, external collaborations were limited the invitation of experts who work in other institutions on an ad-hoc basis or to pre-defined networks, such as LIN, EDIN and the Shannon Consortium.

4.3 – Range & Typographies of Unaccredited CPD Offered.

Introduction: This section represents the data that emerged from responses to Question 13 in the survey that requested the LDO from each of the sample institutions return an outline of the unaccredited teaching and learning CPD programmes that they offered to staff within their institutions. As such it provides a picture of the quantitative data relating to research question 1 of this study.

The data returned by the LDOs was inclusive of the titles of the workshops, seminars and talk series offered, the subjects to be covered and the learning objectives of the courses where available.

The material returned was then thematically analysed in order to identify categories and themes across the unaccredited teaching and learning CPD across the sample organisations. Results showed five overall thematic categories emerged from the analysis. These included digital capacity, assessment, pedagogy, academic development and curriculum design.

Within each of these thematic categories sub themes emerged which allowed us to further categorise and identify specific areas being targetted by institutions.

4.3.1 - Thematic Inclusion Criteria

The criteria by which these were included in individual themes or sub-themes are outlined below.

A - Digital Capacity:

This refers to the use of digital technology within the higher education sector. Any programmes which aligned with the purposes of increasing the digital capacity of participants were included in this category. The contents of this category were further catergorised into two distinct sub-categories. These were Online Teaching/Learning/Assessemt Competencies and Software competencies. Some courses made available by institutions fell into both of these sub-categories.

- *Online Teaching/Learning/Assessemt Competencies:*

  Programmes in this area focused on specific skills so that participants could produce and provide educational content online. This varied from simply being able to provide and create resources online to being able to deliver specific content in an online format.

- *Software Competency:*

  Programmes in this area focused on specific software programmes. Some of these had an added educational context but many were simply focused on providing participants with a basic to advanced understanding of individual software programmes for their own use.

B - Assessment:

Programmes which were aimed at increasing participants' skills and knowledge in relation to assessment were categorised here. These involved a variety of topics which were further categorised into Individual Assessment Techniques, Group Assessment and Assessment Administration. It is worth noting that some areas identified in Digital Capacity included assessment, however these were focused on administering assessments through an online medium whereas this category is focused on design, techniques and administration.

- *Individual Assessment Techniques:*

  Programmes in this area focused on providing participants with assessment techniques that were aimed at assessing individual students. Some courses identified also grouped into the Group Assessment category described below.

- *Group Assessment:*

  Programmes in this area focused on group assessment techniques which could be adopted by professionals in the area. Participants developed strategies by which to conduct group assessment in innovative ways including project work.

- *Assessment Administration:*

  Programmes in this area focused on assessment management and standards. Unlike the two previous sub-categories the focus did not lie in the design/techniques of assessment, rather the implementation and administration of the assessment.

C - Pedagogy:

This category focused on the method and practice of teaching, providing participants with practical tools by which to develop their own pedagogical skills. While assessment is something which would normally be categorised as part of pedagogy, the variety of courses and subsequent sub-categories which emerged both here and in assessment resulted in them being seperated for data presentation. Included here are Developing Student Competencies, Specific Pedagogical Approaches, Teaching for Diversity and Teacher Development which are detailed further below.

- *Developing Student Competencies:*

  Programmes in this area focused on equipping participants with skills by which they could enhance their own students individual competencies in very specific areas of which only two were identified.

- *Specific Pedagogical Approaches:*

  Programmes in this area focused on providing participants with specific techniques and approaches to teaching which they could use in the classroom.

- *Teaching for Diversity:*

  Programmes in this area focused on increasing awareness surrounding the diversity of students which currently exists while also offering practical way by which to approach this. When speaking of diversity it includes providing for learners of different cultures, learners with specific learning difficulties and learners of different strengths.

- *Teacher Development:*

  Programmes in this area focused more broadly on individual skills development for teachers, not focused on any specific pedagogical approaches.

D - Academic Development:

Programmes which enabled participants to develop on their skills and competencies in the world of academia and research, not specifically concerned with teaching and learning, were categorised here. They focused on the sub-categories of Academic Standards, Individual Skills Development and Research Supervision. Each of these sub-categories are explained below.

- *Academic Standards:*

  Programmes in this area focused on providing participants with the knowledge and skills required to uphold and maintain academic standards, primarily concerned with the area of research.

- *Individual Skills Development:*

  Programmes in this area focused on developing specific competencies for participants. Some areas included are specific data analysis softwares, approaches to research and writing.

- *Research Supervision:*

  Programmes in this area focused on developing participants knowledge and skills in the area of research supervision, so that they would be aware of expectations but also gain specific skills for the supervision process.

E - Curriculum Design:

Programmes which aimed to develop participants' competencies in the area of creation and design of curriculum are included in this category. Broadly speaking these courses provided participants with skills by which to choose, design and review the curriculum for their modules intelligently while also adhering to specific guidelines required by individual institutions. Sub-categories included Design & Development and Programme Review.

- *Design & Development:*

  Programmes in this area focused on providing participants with the necessary skills to create and achieve validation for their curriculum.

- *Programme Review:*

  Programmes in this area focused on providing participants with competencies by which to review and assess their curriculum for the purposes of improvement and development.

4.3.2. - Areas Targeted with CPD:

Separate to providing us with the specific programme titles in question 13 of the survey, LDO's were also asked to identify the specific areas that their institutions are targeting in their provision of programmes. These areas fell within the thematic categories identified above. Figure 1. below shows the frequencies by which these areas were identified by institutions.
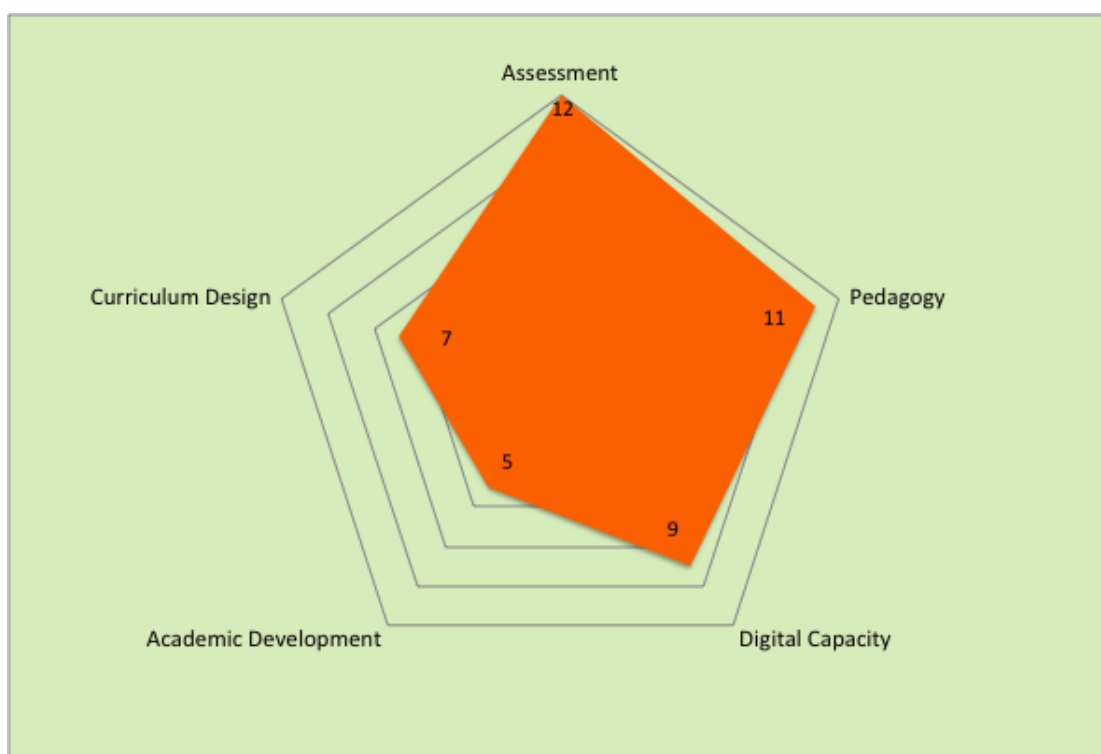
Figure 2. The identified target areas of unaccredited CPD in Teaching and Learning and the number of institutions targeting each particular area with their provision.

Interestingly while institutions did not identify some specific areas that they target in this particular question, they have in fact been captured in question 13 in terms of areas they have actually provided for. Equally while all institutions identified Assessment as an area which they were targeting, based off the information on programmes provided for in question 13, only ten of these twelve in fact provided programmes in this area (See Figures 8+9). This would appear to show a lack of strategic guidance or monitoring of what is actually being provided by some institutions.

4.3.3 – Thematic Range and Frequencies of Unaccredited CPD:

Figure 2. below outlines the percentages each thematic category represents from the overall unaccredited CPD offering. The Digital capacity category of training accounted for 43% of the overall offering across the sample institutions, which accounted for the largest cohort of CPD offered. This was followed by the category of Pedagogy, which accounted for 28%, Academic Development accounted for 15%, Assessment 9% and Curriculum design 5%.
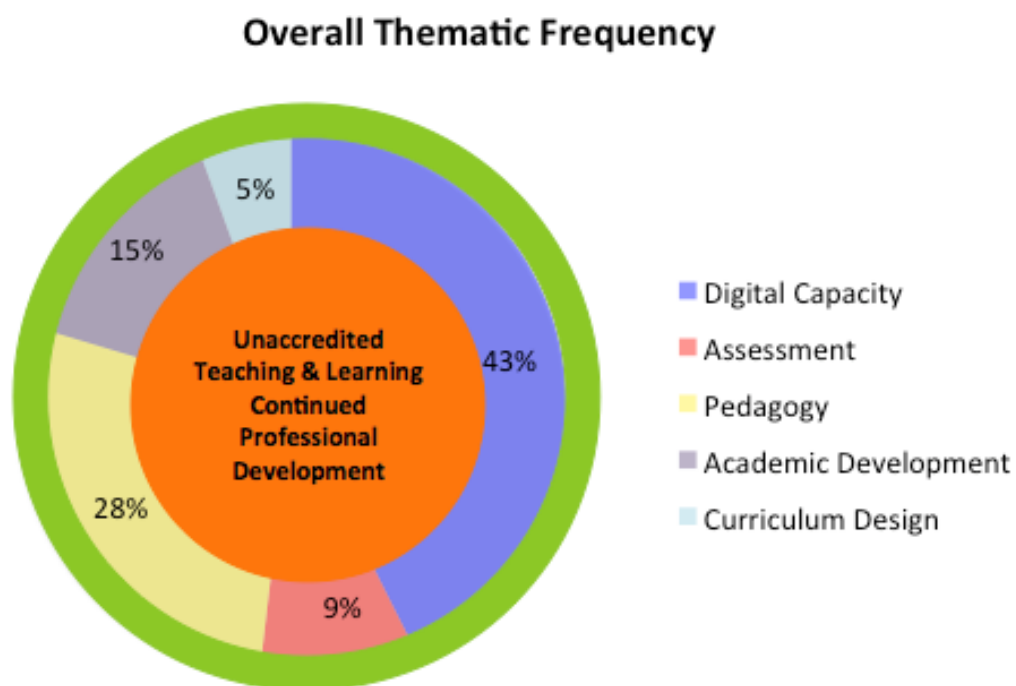
Figure 3. Overall thematic frequency of course offered as unaccredited teaching and learning CPD across sample institutions.

The range in the number of programmes offered per institute overall was 7-30, with a mean of 17 and a median 15.5.

The remainder of this section will outline in more detail the specific range and frequency of the unaccredited CPD training offered within each of these five thematic categories in greater detail, discussing any sub-themes that emerged within each of them uptake across institutions.

A – Digital Capacity:

The category of Digital capacity accounted for 39% of the overall offering of unaccredited teaching and learning CPD across the sample institutions. This could be further sub-divided in the two subthemes of Software Competencies and online Teaching, Learning and Assessment training.
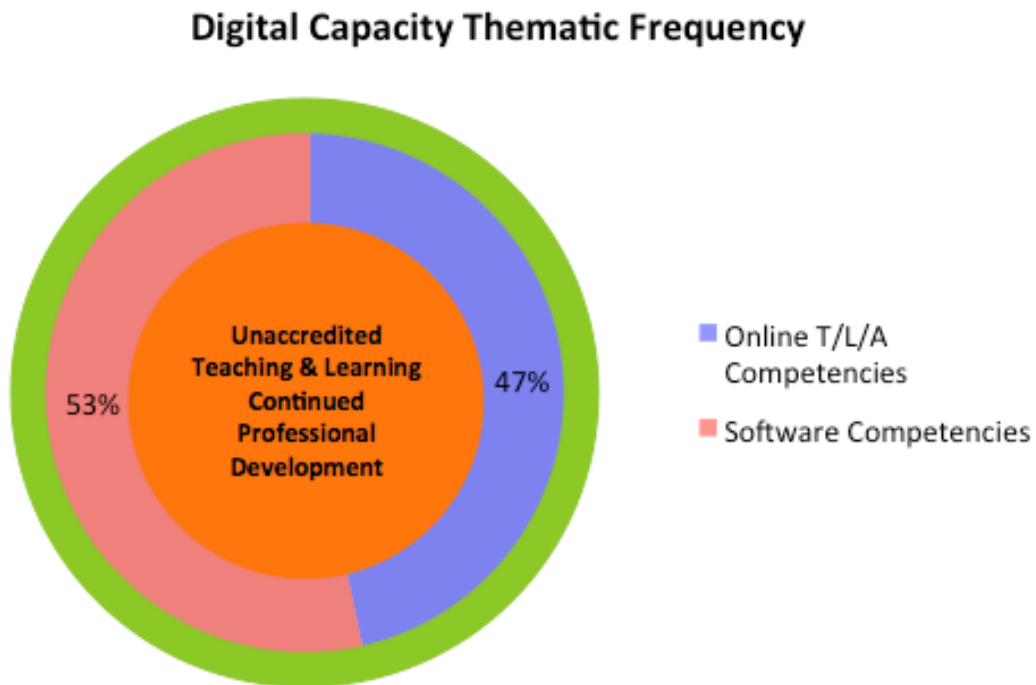
Figure 4. Thematic frequencies within digital capacity category off unaccredited teaching and learning CPD.

AS can be seen in Figure 3, the sub-thematic category of Software cometancies accounted for 53% of the Digital Capacitiy training, while Online Teaching, Learning and Assessment course accounted for 47%. Digital Capacity accounted for 43% of the overall amount of unaccredited teaching and learning CPD on offer.

Figure 4. below indicates the specific unaccredited teaching and learning CPD courses offered within each sub-thematic category and the mean number of course across the sample. The number of programs per institution (PPI) is also indicates the differences within the category when assessed across the sample of insititions. In other words, a significant diversity of course are seen to be offered across the institutions and there was also a large degree of diversity in the number of unaccredited CPD course offerd within each sub-category of the Digital Capacity theme. Figure 5. adds further detail to this in that it details the number of courses offered in these areas by each institution. The points on the x-axis (1-12) represent each of the institutions that took part in this research.

Figure 5. Specific courses and frequencies offered across sample institutions within thematic category of Digital Capacity.

Figure 6. Frequencies of unaccredited CPD courses offered across institutions within the thematic category of digital capacity.

The majority of institutions offered more programmes in the area of software competencies than online teaching/learning/assessment competencies. A large variance exists in the number of programmes offered by each institution, with two institutions offering only one programme in this area and two other institutions offering over ten programmes. It is worth noting that the two institutions that offered one course satisfied the inclusion criteria for both sub-categories in this area which is why the table included with the graph only shows 1's in colums 4 and 12.

B – Assessment:

Assessment Thematic Frequency
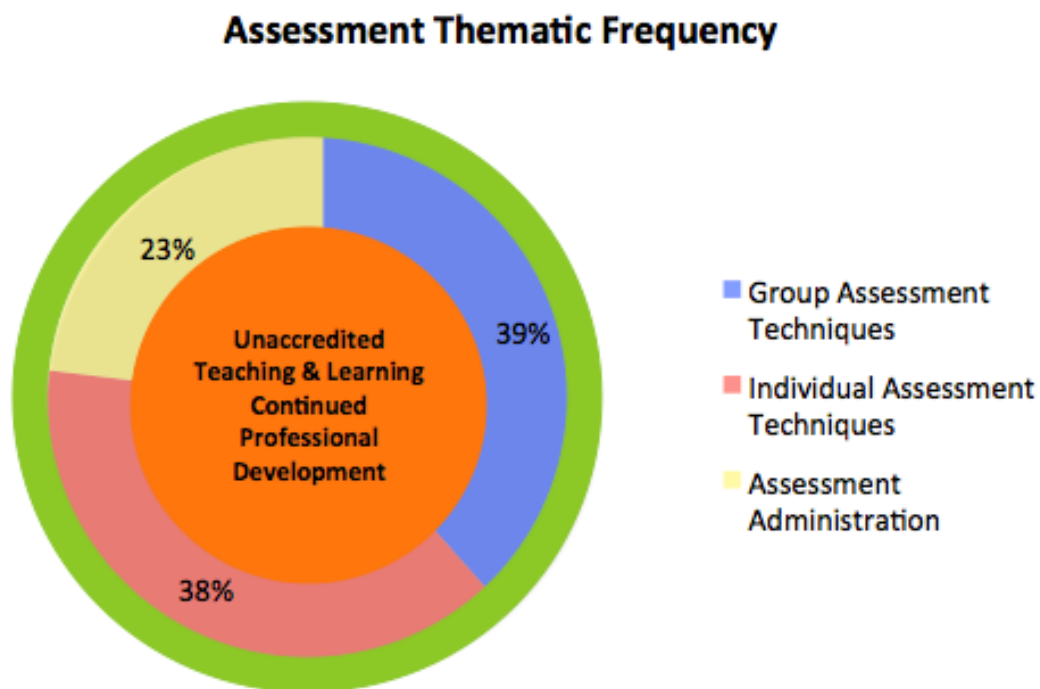
Figure 7. Frequencies within the Assessment thematic category of unaccredited teaching and learning CPD trainings.

The category of Assessment accounted for 9% of the overall offering of unaccredited teaching and learning CPD across the sample institutions. This thematic category could be further sub-divided in the three subthemes of Group Assessment Techniques, Individual Assessment Techniques, and Assessment Administration.

Group Assessment Techniques account for 38% of the overall unaccredited CPD courses offered within this category while   Individual Assessment Techniques accounted for 38%. Assessment Administration accounted for 23% of the overall offering.

Figure 7. below outlines more detailed information regarding the mean, median and PPI for the course offered within these three sub-categories. As the thematic category of Assessment only accounted for 9% of the overall offering of unaccredited CPD course offered across the sample, there was significantly less diversity in course offered across the sub-categories described in Figure 8. In Figure 8. the range in the number of courses offered by each institution is presented in line graph format.
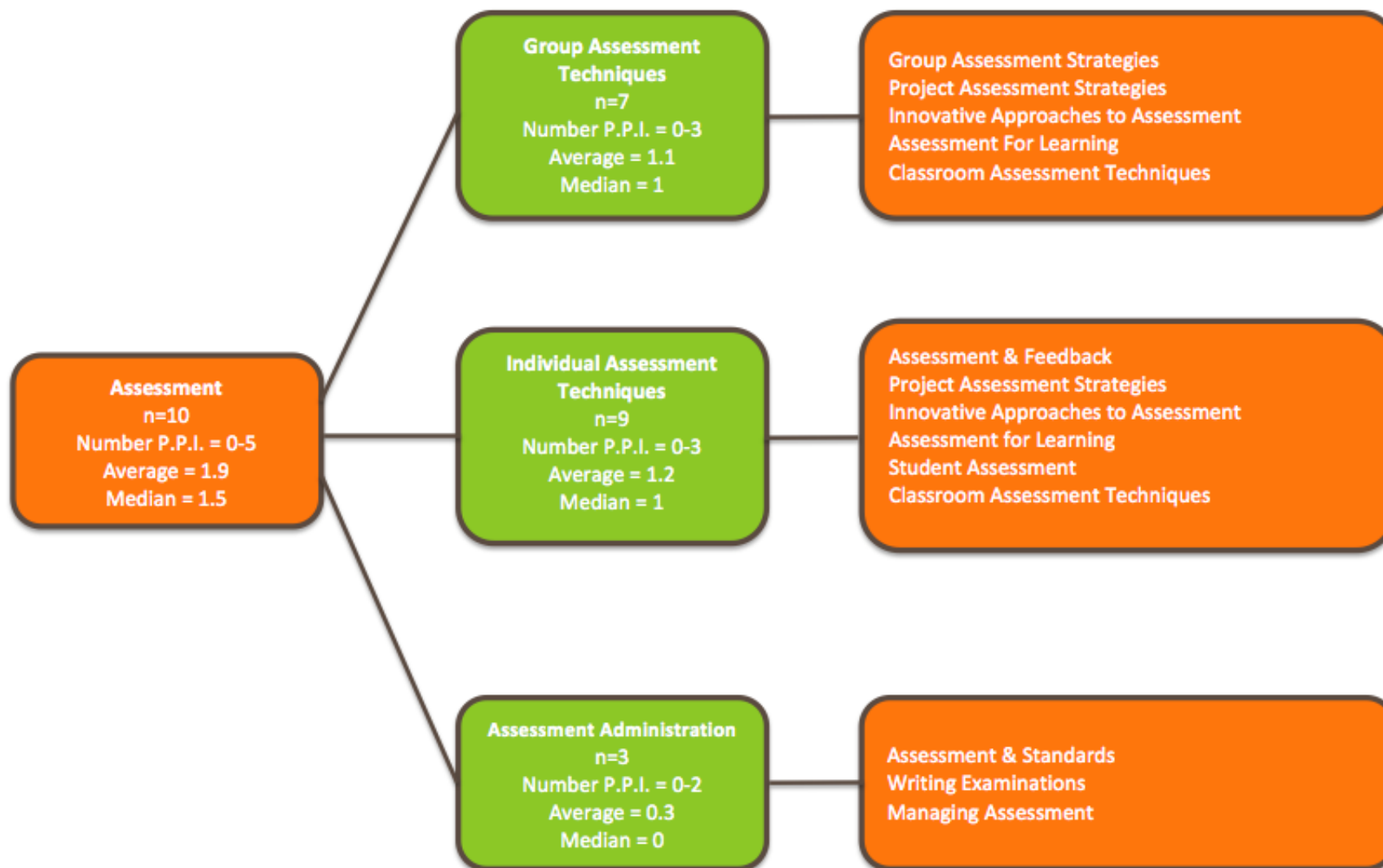
Figure 8. Specific courses and frequencies offered across sample institutions within thematic category of Assessment.
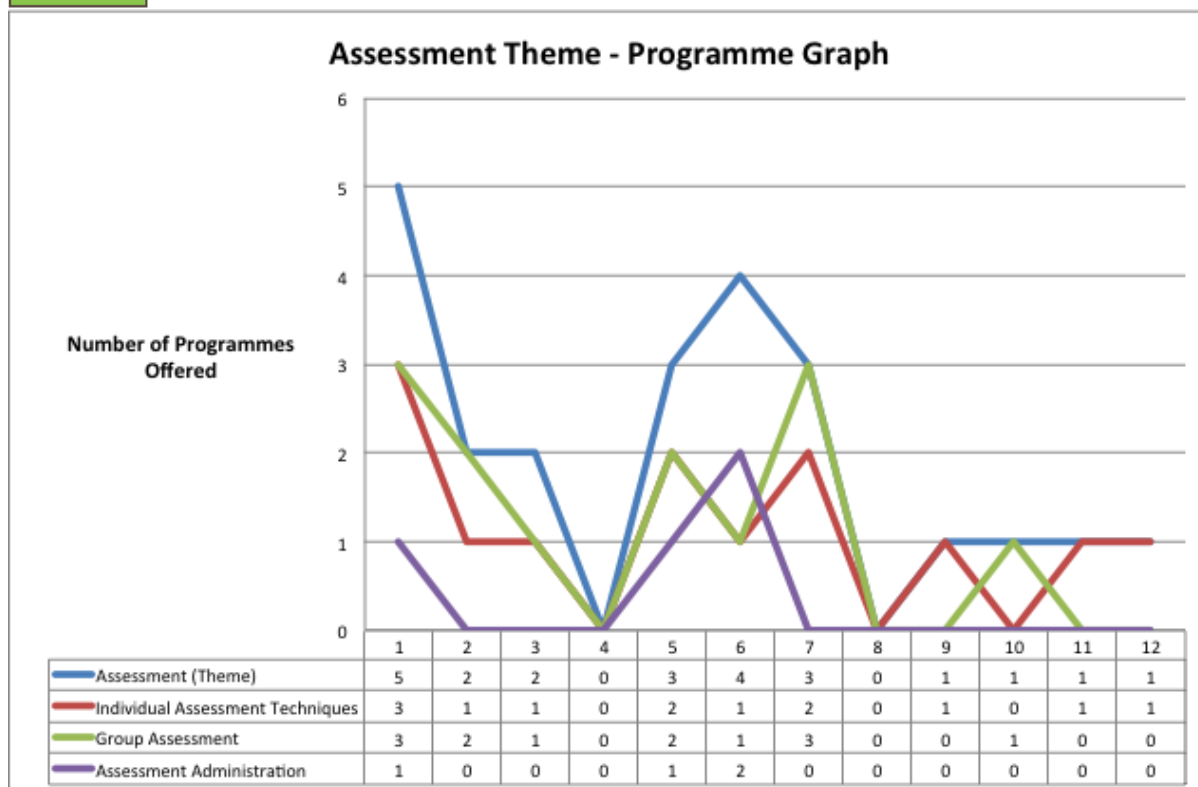
Figure 9. Frequencies of unaccredited CPD courses offered across institutions within the thematic category of assessment.

The majority of institutions offered more programmes in the area of individual assessment techniques than in either group assessment or assessment administration. A variance of of 0-5 exists in the number of programmes offered by any individual institution. There is a clear preference in these institutions for programmes based on the development of specific techniques for assessment of students. Again in this category a number of programmes had links with both sub-categories which will explain how institution 1 has three programmes listed in two sub-categories and one in the final sub-category.

Pedagogy Thematic Frequency
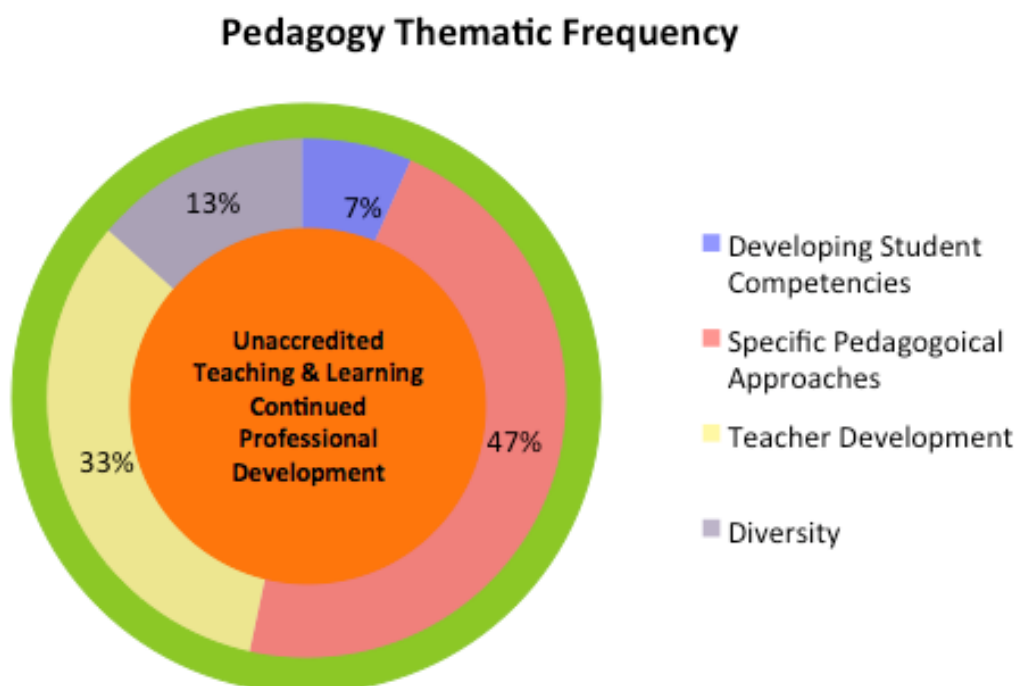
Figure 10. Frequencies within the Pedagogy thematic category of unaccredited teaching and learning CPD trainings.

The category of Pedagogy accounted for 28% of the overall offering of unaccredited teaching and learning CPD across the sample institutions. As the second largest thematic category a total of four subthemes were identified. These included Developing Student Competencies, Specific Pedagogical Approaches, Teacher Development and Diversity.

Specific Pedagogical Approaches accounted for 47% of the overall unaccredited CPD courses offered within this category while Teacher Development accounted for 38%. Diversity and Developing Student Competencies accounted for the least of courses offered in this area, amounting to 13% and 7% respectively.

Figure 10. below outlines more detailed information regarding the mean, median and PPI for the course offered within these four sub-categories. Accounting for 28% of the overall unaccredited teaching and learning CPD courses on offer, a wide variety of courses were on offer within the larger of the two sub-categories, being Specific Pedagogical Approaches and Teacher Development. In Figure 11. the range in the number of courses offered by each institution is presented in line graph format, with further detail on each of the sub-categories.
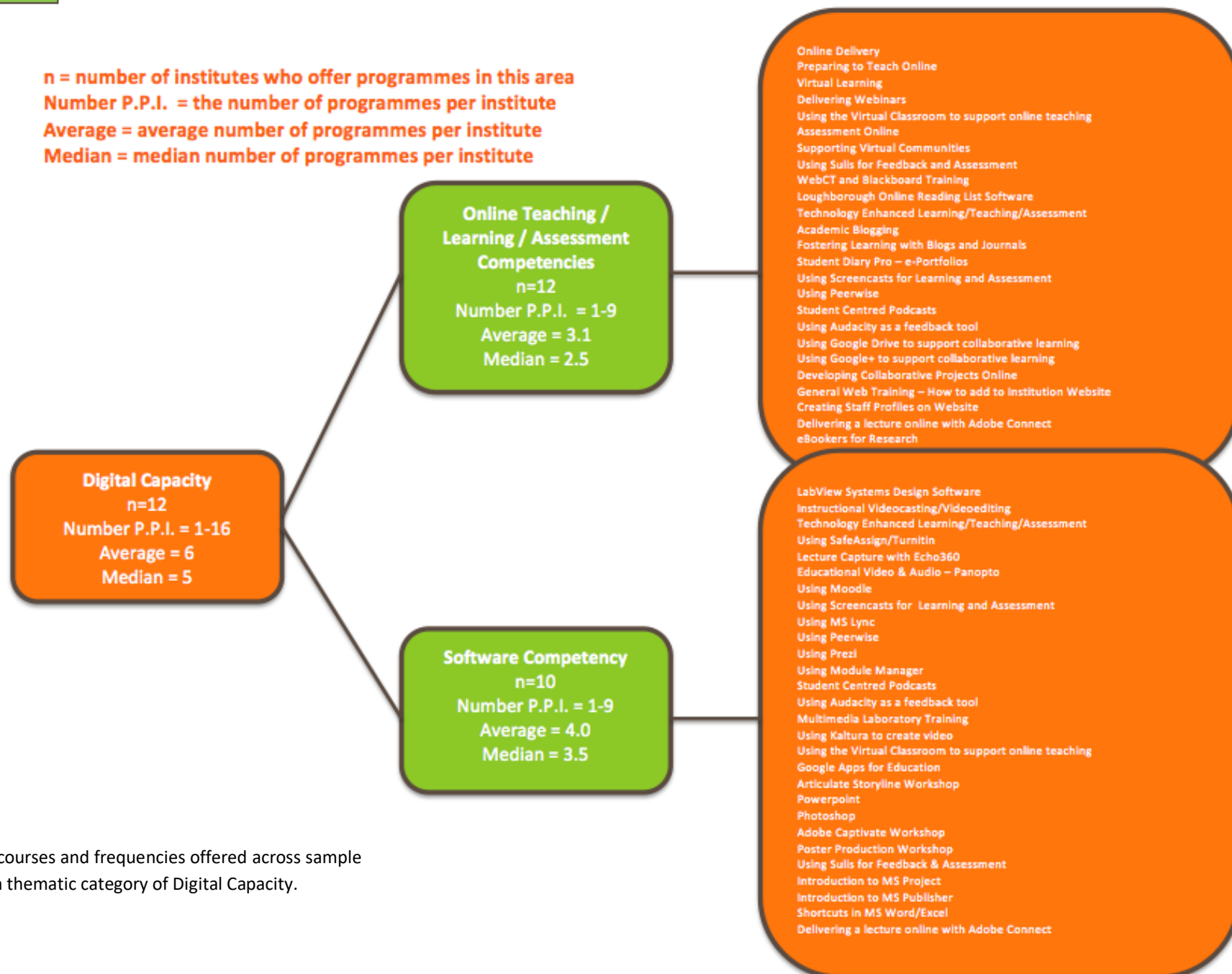
Figure 11. Specific courses and frequencies offered across sample institutions within thematic category of Pedagogy.

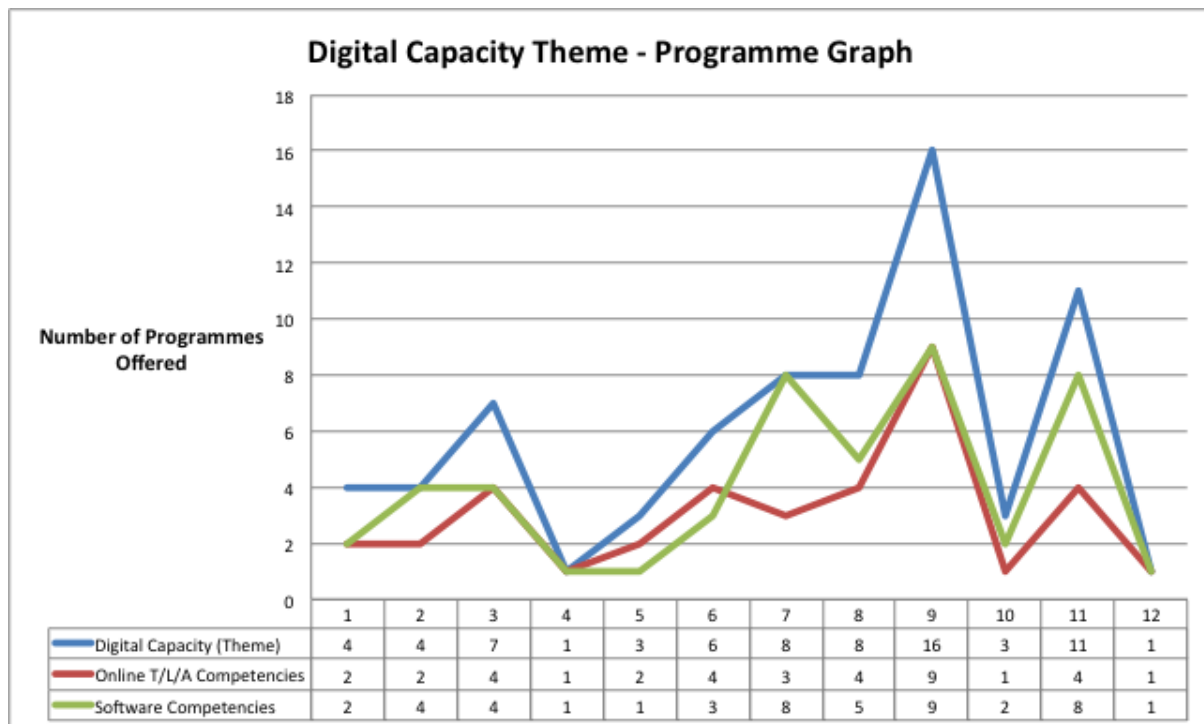Figure 12. Frequencies of unaccredited CPD courses offered across institutions within the thematic category of pedagogy.

Specific pedagogical approaches accounted for the majority of programmes offered in this category. While all institutions offered at least one programmes in the area of pedagogy, two institutions did not offer any programmes in specific pedagogical approaches, while teaching for diversity was offered by 50% of institutions and a minority offered programmes in the area of developing student competencies. All institutions offered programmes in the area of teacher development. A wide variance exists in the number of courses offered in institutions, ranging from 1-10 dependant on the institution. Once again variance in total numbers can explained by cross-thematical links between the sub-categories.

D – Academic Development:

Academic Development Thematic Frequency
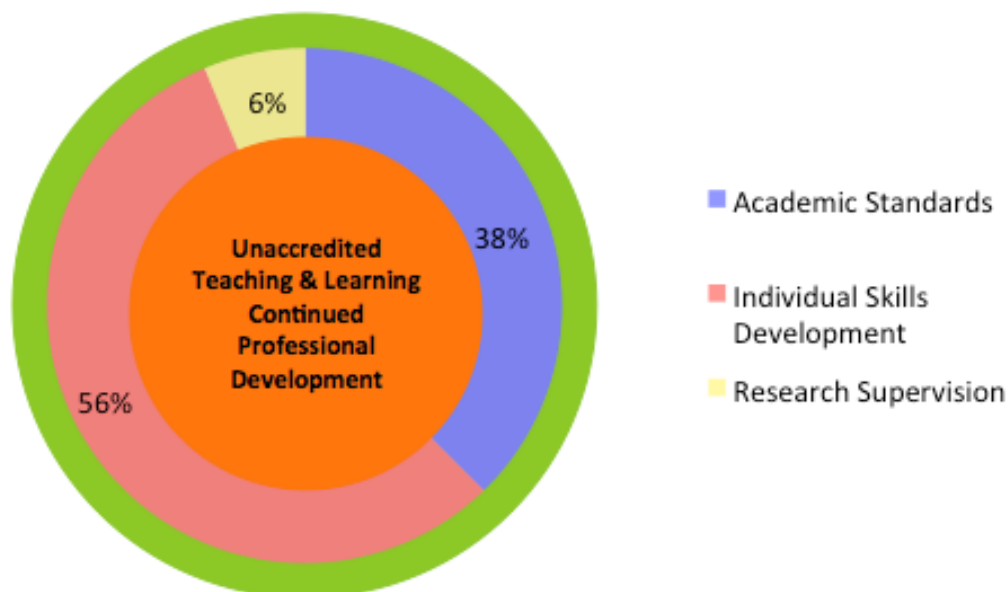
Figure 13. Frequencies within the Academic Development thematic category of unaccredited teaching and learning CPD trainings.

The category of Academic Development accounted for 15% of the overall offering of unaccredited teaching and learning CPD across the sample institutions. This category broke down into three distinct sub-categories which included courses covering Academic Standards, Individual Skills Development and a stand-alone/category in Research Supervision.

Individual Skills Development accounted for 56% of the overall unaccredited CPD courses offered within this category while Academic Standards accounted for 38%. The smallest sub-category was Research Supervision at 6%, however as previously mentioned this was a stand alone course that was offered.

Figure 13. below outlines more detailed information regarding the mean, median and PPI for the course offered within these three sub-categories. There are a range of courses on offer within two of these sub-categories. In Figure 14. the range in the number of courses offered by each institution is presented in line graph format, with further detail on each of the sub-categories. Courses in Research Supervision were on offer in a total of four institutions.
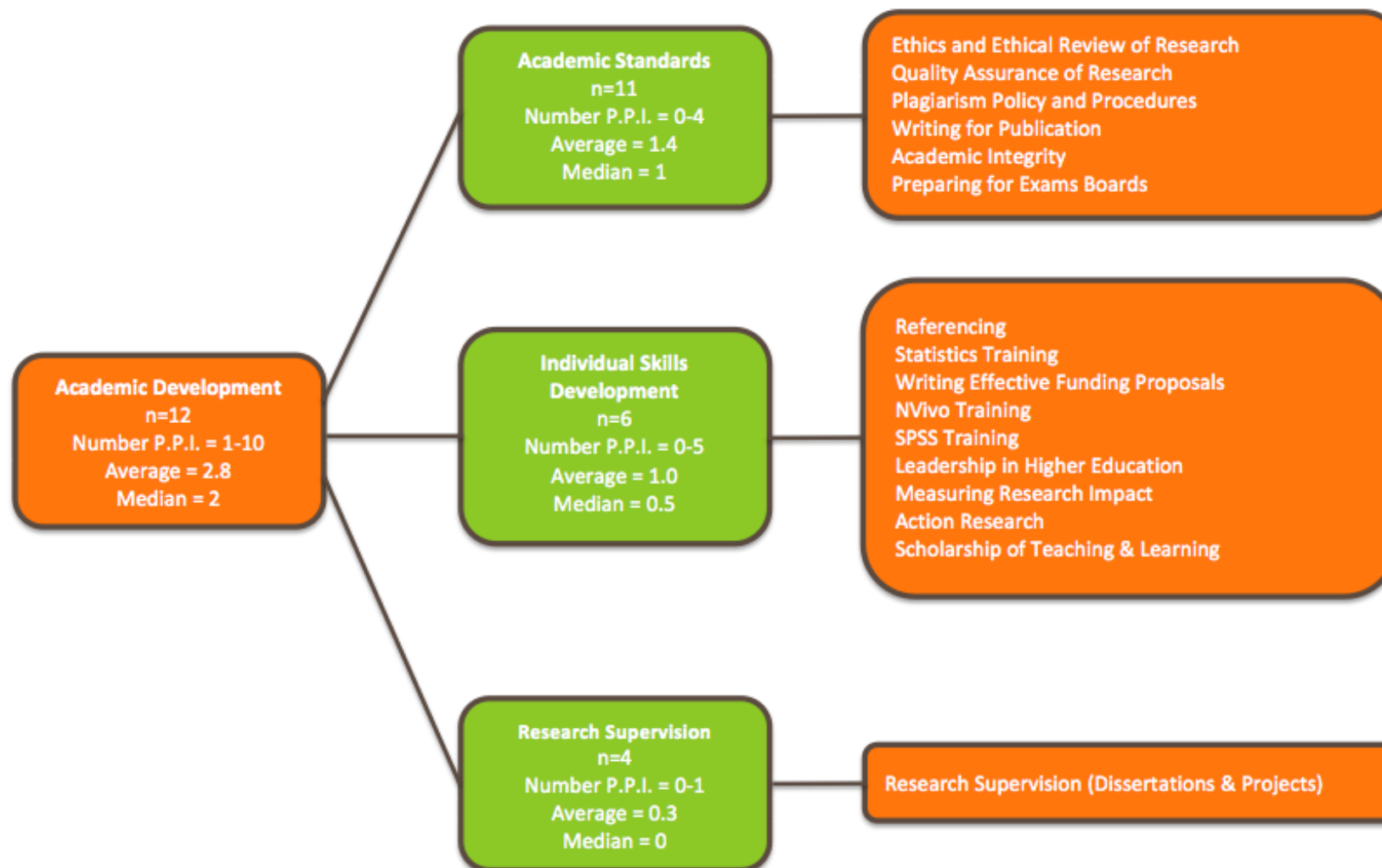
Figure 14. Specific courses and frequencies offered across sample institutions within thematic category of Academic Development.

Academic Development Theme - Programme Graph

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Academic Development (Theme)	10	1	2	3	2	4	2	3	1	1	3	1
Academic Standards	4	1	1	1	1	2	1	3	1	1	1	0
Individual Skills Development	5	0	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	2	1
Research Supervision	1	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
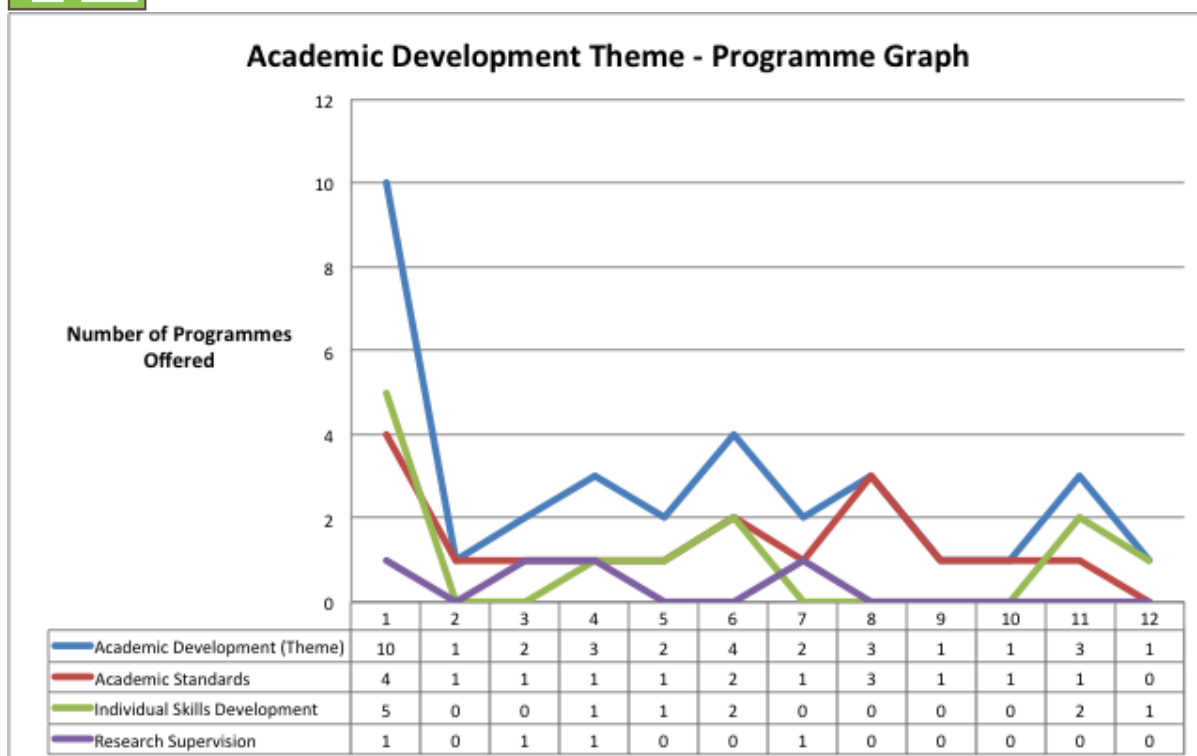
Figure 15. Frequencies of unaccredited CPD courses offered across institutions within the thematic category of academic development.

A significant variance exists in the number of programmes offered in the category of academic development across institutions, ranging from 1-10. All but one institution offered at least one programme in the sub-category of academic standards, while there was a 50% split in the number of institutions that offered programmes in the ub-category of individual skills development. Courses in Research Supervision were on offer in a total of four institutions, equating to 33% of the sample.

E – Curriculum Design:

Curriculum Design Thematic Frequency
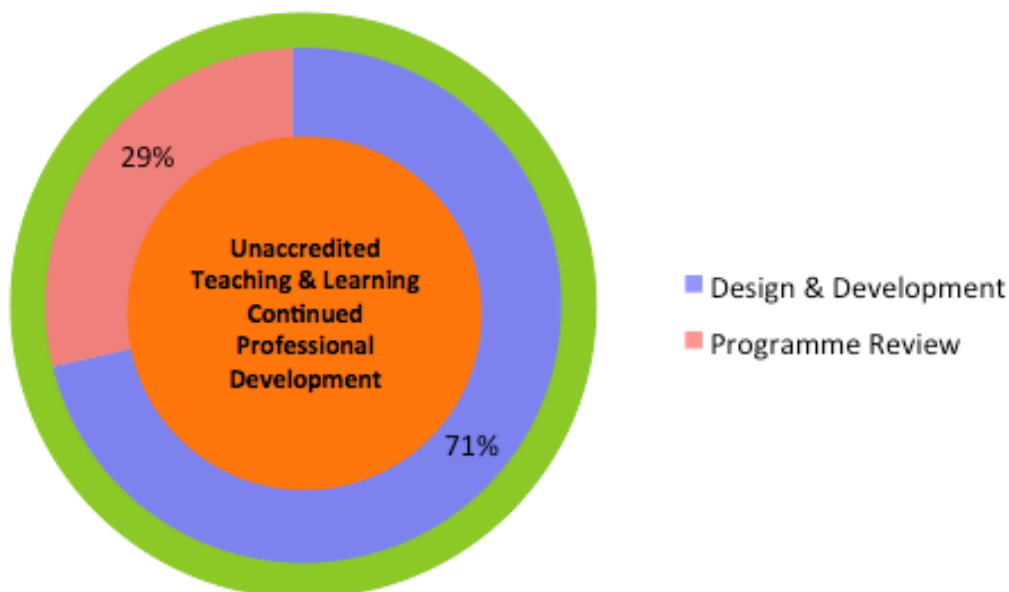
Figure 16. Frequencies within the Curriculum Design thematic category of unaccredited teaching and learning CPD trainings.

The category of Curriculum Design accounted for 5% of the overall offering of unaccredited teaching and learning CPD across the sample institutions, making it the least frequent category for which courses are on offer. This category broke down into two distinct sub-categories which were Design & Development and Programme Review.

Design & Development accounted for 71% of the overall unaccredited CPD courses offered within this category while Programme Review accounted for 29%. There is not a wide variety of courses on offer in each of these sub-categories.

Figure 16. below outlines more detailed information regarding the mean, median and PPI for the course offered within these three sub-categories. Figure 17. details the range in the number of courses offered by each institution is presented in line graph format, with further detail on each of the sub-categories.
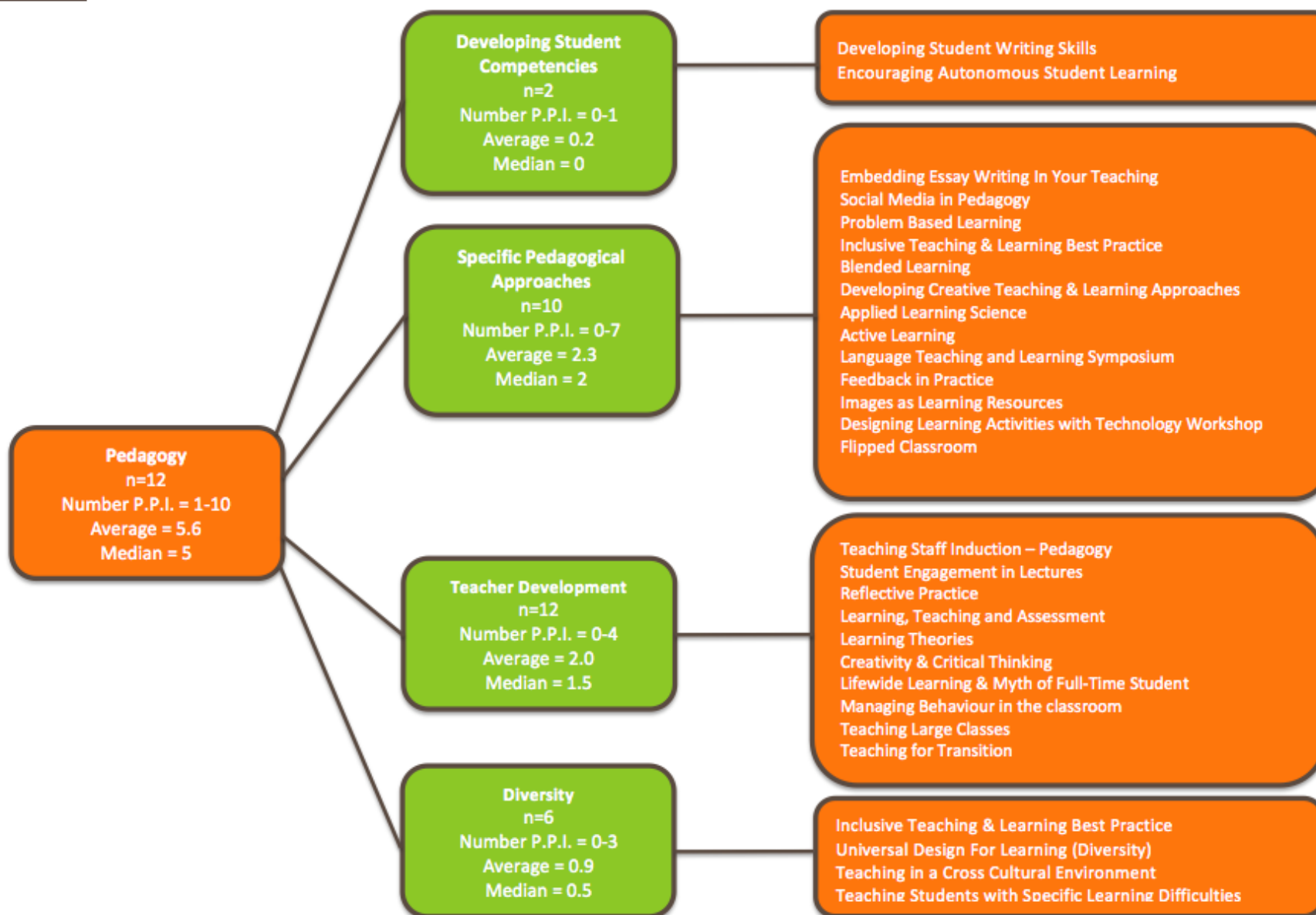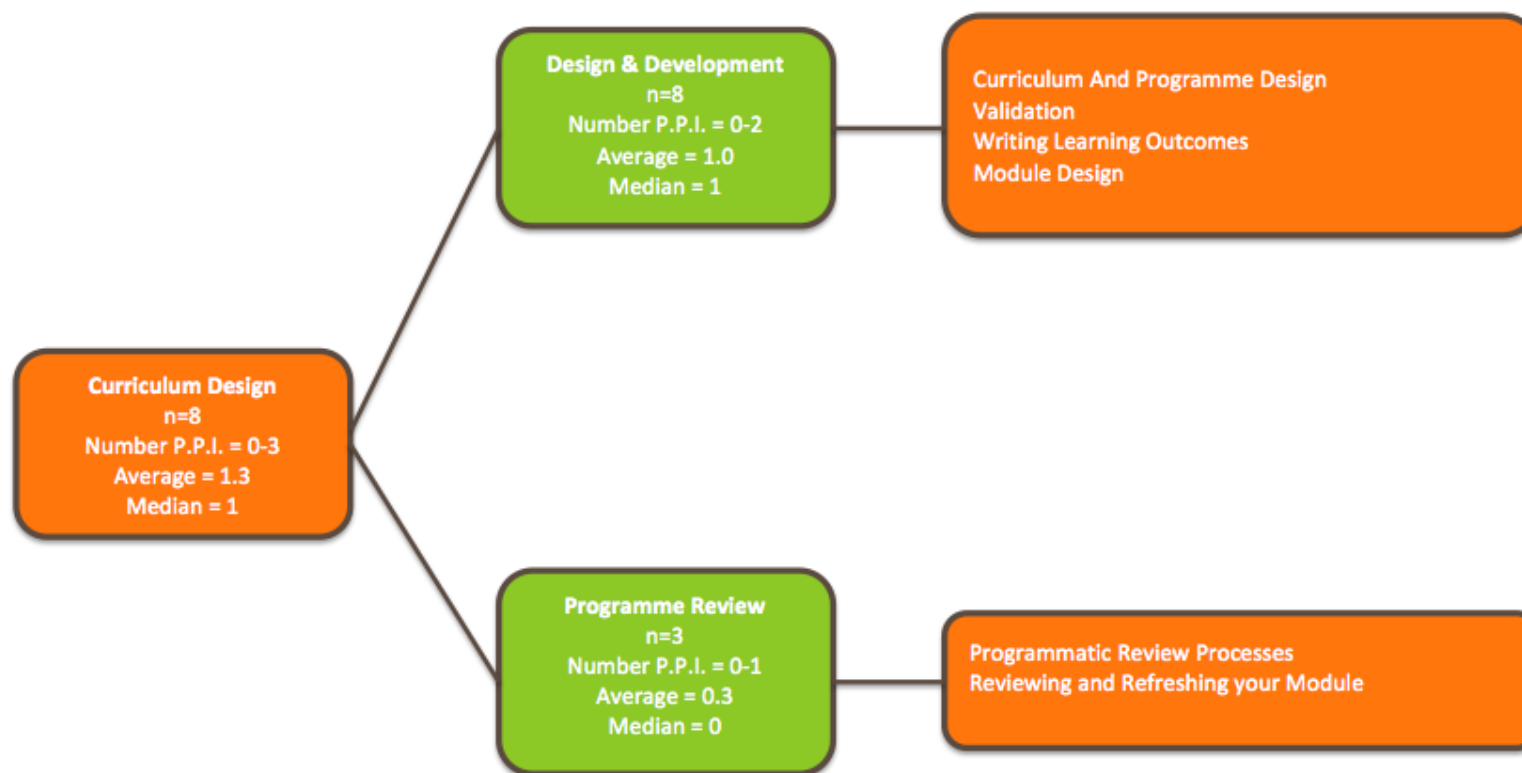
Figure 17. Specific courses and frequencies offered across sample
institutions within thematic category of Curriculum Design.
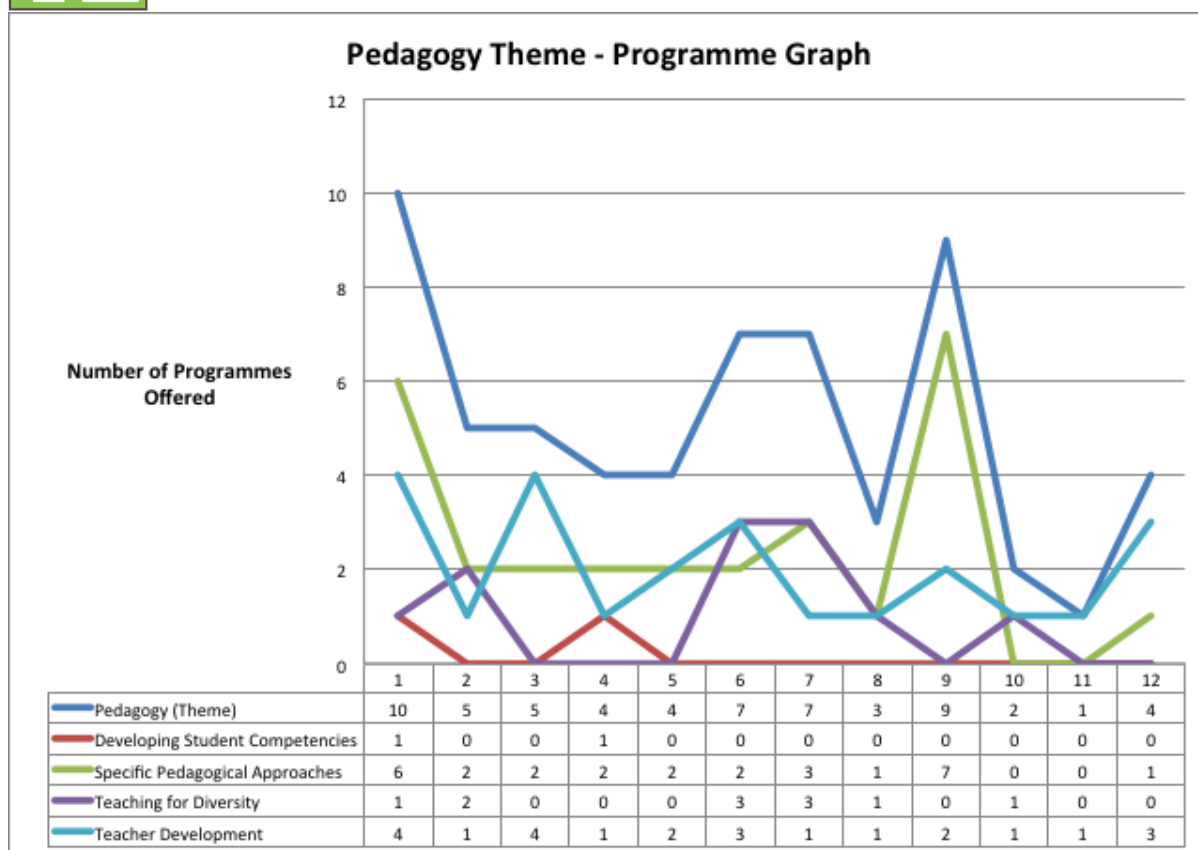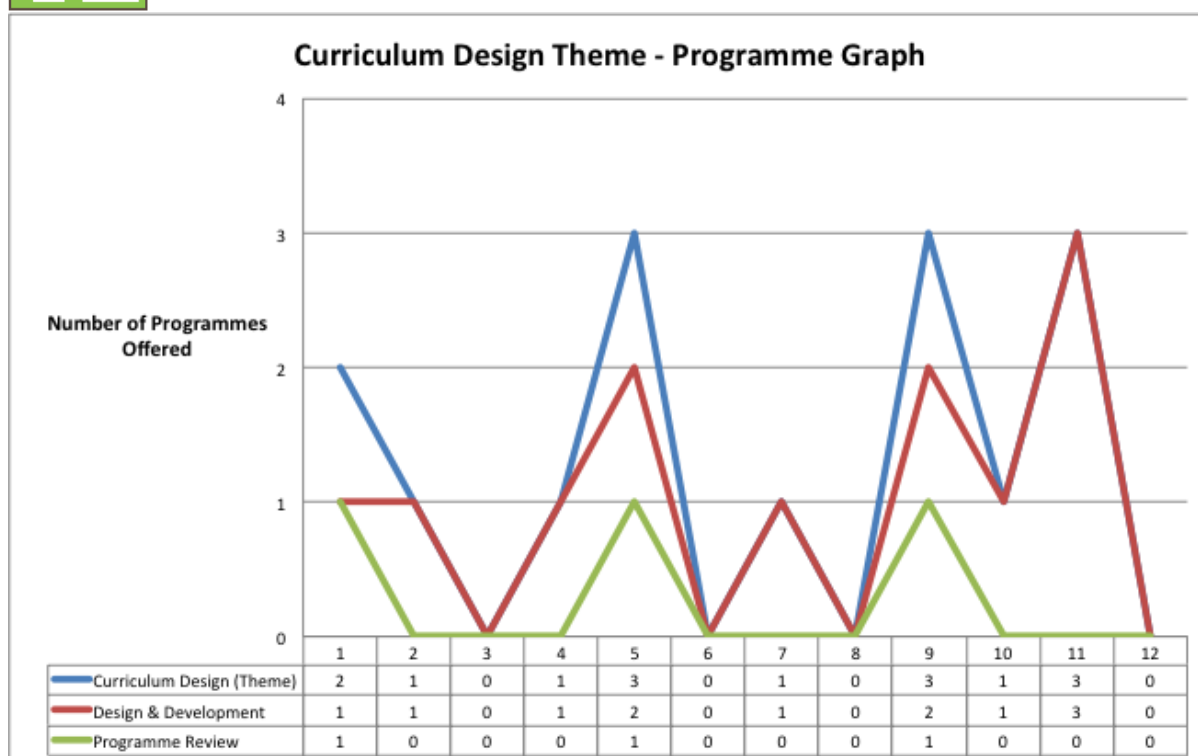
Figure 18. Frequencies of unaccredited CPD courses offered across institutions within the thematic category of curriculum design.

A total of four institutions did not offer programmes in this area to their staff. The majority of programmes offered by institutions and in this category in general related to the design and development of curriculum. These programmes were offered in eight institutions, while those in the sub-category of programme review were offered in three institutions, equating to 25% of the sample. In those institutions only one programme in this area was offered.

4.3.4 - Types of Unaccredited CPD Provided

There were a number of different types of CPD discussed by LDOs. These are listed below, in no particular order.

- Peer observation and feedback
- 1 themed workshop a month (2 hours)
- 5 minute teaching tips: speakers are 'champions' in the institution. Each speaker has 5 minutes on a particular tip or topic. Session lasts for 1 hour.
- Creation of portfolios for a Teaching Awards
- Winner of Teaching Award giving a seminar about their practice
- Brown Bag Lunches: Lunch-time seminars, normally no longer than an hour
- 5-session training on postgraduate supervision, resulting in certification rather than accreditation
- Conferences (such as EuroSoTL)
- Focused summer school (e.g. E-learning)
- Online sessions

4.3.2 - Different Audiences

The idea of 'audience' was one that came through a number of times when LDOs spoke about CPD provision. They highlighted the need to be concerned with what it was their specific audience needs, but also noting that there may be groups of people who need or want accredited, but equally many do not need or want accredited CPD for which Unaccredited CPD would be vital.

> *"So I think that's where the unaccredited stuff is really taking off on its own. You know. The credited CPD then is a whole different audience…it's back to what the person needs from a professional and a personal and a strategic level"* (LDO 1)

There were different groups of people, other than contracted lecturing staff, that CPD was provided for:

> *"…this year we ran a unaccredited piece, it's actually in pilot phase for post docs. And this was as a result of a little bit of a legal issue in respect of their role and their kind of you know opportunities within a university for CPD, and it was in particular in respect of teaching and learning CPD…There is another group actually…our teaching fellows"* (LDO 10)

Summary: This section outlined ranges and typologies of the unaccredited CPD training that are being offered for teaching and learning staff within the higher education sector, explicitly answering Research Question 1 of this study.

A wide range of programmes are on offer within institutions. The main findings of this section include the breakdown of these programmes within each thematic category with digital capacity accounting for 43% of all programmes offered, pedagogy accounting for 28%, academic development accounding for 15%, assessment accounting for 9% and curriculum design accounting for 5%. Also important from this section is the wide variance in the number of programmes offered in each institution. The number of programmes offered in institutions varied in the range of 7-30, which suggests either from a strategic or resource point of view, instittutions have varied values towards unaccredited CPD. Within the thematic categories the number of programmes offered varied as follows: digital capacity 1-16; assessment 0-5; pedagogy 1-10; academic development 1-10 and curriculum design 0-3. This shows that the level of support provided to professionals across institutions to up-skill and develop themselves as professionals through unaccredited CPD varies greatly.

Within each of the thematic categories there were different areas targetted, with a total of 14 sub-categories identified in the purpose of the training that is being provided. A large part of programmes focused on digital capacity and the use of technology enhanced teaching/learning/assessment. There was significantly less of a focus placed on pedagogy, assessment and curriculum design which would seemingly be vital as a foundation by which to then build a variety of content deliverty methods through digital capacity training.

On the basis of discrepancies between the self-identified areas targetted by the institutions and the programmes actually on offer it would appear that some institutions do not have strategic guidance by which to implement the unaccredited CPD programmes. Rather they are done primarily on an ad-hoc basis responding to requests by staff to respective teaching and learning committees or those in charge of implementation of the programmes. Each institution has it's own needs and appears to be satisfying those needs as best they can on this basis.

A wide variety of styles and approaches the unaccredited CPD exists across the sample, with the majority taking the format of seminars/workshops. These are available in some cases, not only to teaching and learning professionals but also postgraduate students and those engaged in postdoctoral research.

While significant differences existed between the number of programmes offered by institutions the majority of institutions were all targeting roughly the same areas. A central repository or plan on the areas which are being targeted and provided for by institutions may help them to streamline their own unaccredited CPD provision, in a way such that resources and expertise may be utilised across institutions. As it stands, the institution in which you work will greatly effect the range and availability of programmes for you to participate in to develop yourself professionally.

4.4 - Monitoring of attendance, engagement and impact

<u>Overview:</u> Research question two in of this study sought to explore the uptake of unaccredited CPD across the sample of participating institutions. It also sought to identify any patterns regarding the uptake of unaccredited CPD and explore how different disciplinary groupings engaged with CPD.

Results showed that the majority of institutions (n=10) maintain a record of the up-take of unaccredited CPD. However, in most instances this appears to be a basic record of attendance/numbers present but such records did not appear to be maintained across all courses offered. In contrast, it was the practice in some institutions for attendances at unaccredited CPD to be recorded in staffs' individual personal file in some cases. In one instance attendance at these programmes is also sent to HR.

Importantly, however, no LDO's were able to provide detailed information regarding the patterns of engagement in unaccredited CPD across disciplinary groupings in their institutions. No institution appeared to collect such data to inform targeted CPD planning into the future or to refine provision. As such, it was not possible to present data on this area.

This section will provide results in the areas of approaches to monitoring of attendance and engagement with unaccredited CPD and anecdotal qualitative data regarding patterns of attendance among staff. Finally, data related to approaches used to evaluate unaccredited CPD will be discussed.

4.4.1 - Monitoring attendance/engagement and usage of data
Almost all institutions take an attendance at organised CPD events. However, what happens to this data varies. Sometimes names or, more simply, numbers go on file and these numbers may be used in the case of programmatic quality review. *"We keep track just for our own records should a quality review person require data on engagement in unaccredited CPD which comes up.."* (LDO 1). This function of the records appeared to be focused on demonstrating the outcomes of the CPD provision services themselves, using number of engaging staff as a metric for quality measurement.

Across a number of the institutions names of participating staff were maintained or recorded for future reference. However, while many of the LDOs across the institutions reported they *".. maintain a database"* and *".. can backtrack and at any point we can find out who has attended"* (LDO 3), it was not always clear what level of communication with staff occurred regarding engagement. Some

LDO's were very clear that they ".. *don't go down to the point of 'well why didn't you attend"* (LDO1) and that they did not see their role as to "..*monitor somebody's progress in that… So monitoring… it's not really monitored"* (LDO 3).

However, some LDO's across other institutions did report being in communication with particular schools or departments regarding staff participation in unaccredited CPD. However, again it is not clear what the overarching function of the records being kept are and what their focus was in the institutions overall strategic plans.

> *"The CPD register for example I did admissions tutor training last week. So I would expect everybody - I said to the Head of Department now make sure that goes on to your CPD register and make the schools look after it themselves"* (LDO 7)

In contrast, LDOs across a minority of other institutions report that they sent name and records of attendance in unaccredited CPD courses to HR departments. *"Anything we've ever done we have a record"* (LDO 5). However, these record were described in some cases as being *"manual"* records of attendance sheets that ".. *I type them up send it to HR"* (LDO 5). Interestingly, most LDO's did not report knowing what happens to the data there. Interestingly, in two institutions attendance is sent to HR and attached to an individual's profile. These profiles appeared also be accessible to the staff themselves though self-access IT platforms.

> *"We do keep records and it goes into the core HR system so that when people have attended any of our workshops it's actually in there… By name, it actually goes into core – which is their core HR reference. Should be able to run a report then - so and so attended"* (LDO 8)

> *"What happens now is that I can go into my HR profile and I can see all the things that I signed up to and did over the last few years. And in fact they have actually been historically updated"* (LDO 10)

It remains unclear among the participating staff or LDO's how these data were being utilised by HR or what function the served in progress reviews or progression processes.

4.4.2 - Attendance Patterns

A major finding from the data regarding patterns of attendance of unaccredited CPD among teaching and learning professionals was that none of the participating LDO's were able to provide detailed data regarding patterns of disciplinary attendance. The LDO's were thus not able to make comments regarding differences or specific needs regarding particularly disciplinary groupings.

In addition, while data was maintained regarding number of staff attending workshops and courses of unaccredited CPD, and in some cases the names of staff attending were recorded and passed to HR department or schools, ongoing monitoring of an individual staffs engagement did also not occur. *So monitoring… it's not really monitored"* (LDO 3) of particular staffs level of engagement, but rather recording of incidents of engagement. Further analysis or guidance in future engagement was not reported to occur on a structured ongoing basis.

A potential outcome of this is that attendance and engagement with unaccredited CPD was reported as being variable. Anecdotally LDOs spoke about attendance patterns that have been occurring recently and the majority provide the same narrative - that is that numbers are falling

> *"Initially brilliant. First two, three, four years really good. Dwindled year five. Completely."* (LDO 1)

> *"We'd run six different short mini-seminars over the course of the year. Often quite poorly attended"* (LDO 2)

> *"…target was 15-20 people and we had 8. Disappointing… We'll always struggle with the non-attendees"* (LDO 5)

> *"Unfortunately it was people got busy and initially they were really well attended. And we were trying to do them on a regular basis. And then it just petered out"* (LDO 7)

> *"There was a time when you probably would have had I mean 20 or we'd specify unless we had twenty people we wouldn't do a workshop. Those days are gone, we're looking at 5-10 people now which is good in a sense"* (LDO 8)

> *"We used to have dozens and easily kind of in the dozens for those workshop but now you're talking sub a dozen"* (LDO 10)

These anecdotal reports suggest an ongoing dynamic of disengagement with provision of unaccredited CPD across many of the institutions in the sample. However, this is not the case for all CPD or all institutions. Some topics, such as tutor induction or postgraduate supervision will often been attended by very high numbers. One institution observed a spike in engagement this year that was not previously present:

> *"You could get twelve people attending typically and this year it might have been up to 100. We've had to get bigger rooms. Some of them have had maybe 50 people attending. Just again, it's on lunchtime…This year it's just boomed in every way. There's a real appetite for it this year"* (LDO 9)

This suggests that academic staff or disciplinary professionals are willing to engage and participate in unaccredited CPD in some cases. However, their ongoing high workload where *"..partly because teaching load has got crazy the last fear years" (*FG4 –P4) staff have become more discerning with what they are willing to engage with. In many cases, disciplinary professionals reported being selective in engaging with *"unaccredited stuff in lots of cases [which is] much more practically"* relevant to their own needs. (FG4 –P4)

> *"Yeah I support it has to be relevant to something you are currently teaching and you go well that looks interesting, I'd be interested in that. It has to be based on need. It has to be based on needs. You don't get promoted if you don't do it either (laughter)"* (FG2 – P1)

As such, many staff suggested they chose courses of unaccredited CPD to participate in based on relevance to their own teaching responsibilities. Staff look at their own "interests and needs" and select course to participate in based on "But I think maybe doing courses that aren't really relevant and aren't accredited it's a bit frustrating" (FG1 – P3).

These findings suggest that a greater degree of communication between teaching and learning professionals and those that design, source or deliver unaccredited CPD might support greater levels of engagement and meet staff needs "where they area at" (FG4-P2). This may also be supported through increased collaborations with departmental head or schools across higher educational institutions.

4.4.3 - Evaluation of CPD programmes and impact

All institutions indicated that there were mechanisms by which participants may provide feedback on any unaccredited programme that they attend. It should be noted however, that a number of institutions indicated that this may not always occur or may often be at the discretion of the facilitator as to whether or not it will happen. One institution highlighted that specific evaluations do take place.

CPD programmes offered by institutions are formally reviewed by seven of the sample institutions. In these institutions the majority are done so on an annual basis, with one institution completing formal review bi-annually. One institution did not provide the procedures by which these reviews happen or details regarding its frequency of occurrence. In all other cases the programmes are reviewed by the relevant teaching/learning/assessment committees/groups.

Some institutions highlighted that the feedback is then analysed for the purposes of assessing the benefit of the programme to their staff. It is also used for the purposes of improving the delivery of current CPD offerings, but also in identifying additional areas for which CPD may be required.

> *"…they all fill out an evaluation form at the end. Literally it's a Likert 1-5 then things like, do you want more and future suggestions"* [And how effective do you find that process – does it work quite well?] *"It differs"* (LDO 3)

Most CPD providers will take feedback from participants, whether by an exit evaluation form or survey online. These surveys may also be a useful source of suggestions for future workshops or in developing collaborative links with staff or departments in the institutions. *"I got feedback from the staff. They wanted follow up. So I organised the follow up"* (LDO 5).

However, in many cases the information from the reviews appears to be relatively difficult to use. The LDO's often reported that the most useful data for them as providers focussed on pragmatic issues such as duration of workshops of modes of delivery rather than selections of topics,

> *Often you'd see it might be to do with things like timing. Maybe the session was too long you need to make it shorter or break it up…you know"* (LDO 4)

Summary: The main findings reported in this section are that, while records are kept regarding attendances at unaccredited CPD training, there were a number of differences in the approaches taken to record engagement from staff across the differing institutions. None of the LDO's interviewed reported monitoring individual or disciplinary group engagement on an on-going basis or using such data to plan future provision. Attendance patterns and levels of engagement were also reported to vary across both differing institutions and course offerings, with attendances across many unaccredited CPD trainings reported to have fallen in recent years. Finally, while all institutions across the sample reported using mechanisms to collect feedback from participants in their unaccredited CPD program, only one institution had attempted to assess the impact of participating in unaccredited CPD on staff professional practice. All other institutions did not have any measure of the effectiveness or impact unaccredited CPD had for staff who participated in such programmes.

This section sought to address research question that explored the uptake of unaccredited CPD across the sample of participating institutions. The uptake across the sample of participating HE institutions was reported to be mixed, but had been recorded as falling across many course of unaccredited CPD. However, some forms of CPD that appeared to align with staff needs and were

seen has having a practical value by staff remain well attended. This emphasised the importance of aligning both CPD topic and methods of provision with areas of need identified by staff within higher education settings.

Research question 2 also sought to identify any patterns regarding the uptake of unaccredited CPD and explore how different disciplinary groupings engaged with CPD. Given that all but one of the participating HEIs did not maintain data regarding patterns of engagement across disciplinary groupings, it is not possible to make specific findings in this regard. This may be an area of future research as such information would have value in meeting the particular needs of differing cohorts of staff according to their particular disciplinary or course delivery needs.

4.5. – Culture and Practice of Engagement with CPD

The concept of culture emerged from the data in many ways and this section will discuss the thematic categories that emerged in order to address research question 3 that explored culture and practice among teaching and learning professionals regarding unaccredited CPD participation.

There are a range of cultural norms or practices that appear to guide the provision of unaccredited CPD and as well as influencing of professionals within each institution engaged with the CPD. Some factors were heavily influenced by external forces that impacted across many institutions, but this impact may have differed from one HEI to another. Other factors were derived from within the institutions themselves and contributed toward the particular culture of engagement. There were also factors that limited the provision, and particularly engagement, with unaccredited CPD.

4.5.1 External

Participants of this study acknowledged that CPD provision was sometimes driven by a responsiveness to external forces, which included national and international reports/standards, available funding, ratings and evaluations, todays changing society, and current socio-economic or political issues. There are also professional standards or guidelines for professional practice and continuous professional development emanating from particular disciplinary groupings or professional bodies that are external to the sample of institutions that participated in the current study.

HE Policy Developments: A number of reports, guidelines and policies were discussed by participants throughout the study. They highlighted how these documents played a key role in decision making surrounding the direction of CPD provision. LDOs across the sample reported being aware of a range of policy documents that guided their work in formulating and selecting topics for provision of unaccredited CPD. These would include "*European Standards & Guidelines*" (LDO 3), *"the Hunt Report"* (LDOs 7, 8 and 9), national strategies and the Bologna Declaration.

> *"…the original learning, teaching and assessment strategy probably came out in 2008/9 and that would have been developed very much around the time of just following Bologna and there was a need to sort of document that and to show how that applied in our situation"* (LDO 11)

University Ranking Metrics: Another important external driver that has an impact on the selection and provision of unaccredited CPD across the sample was the universities rating and ranking metrics. Among both LDOs and staff within disciplinary groupings there was an acute awareness that these rating systems had a strong impact on the strategic plans of higher education institutions. These

strategic plans then in turn impacted on the ways staff felt they were assessed themselves and what was being asked of them. The pressure felt by the application of metrics to the work of the university appeared to have an impact on people's willingness to engage in unaccredited CPD. In fact, this externally imposed cultural trend was reported to influence overall perspectives of teaching and learning. It was stated that what "counts in university ratings is ISI" (FG2-P1). This metrification of academics work meant certain aspects of it became more rewarded than others:

> "...*research is going to get me funding, going to get me publications, going to get me progressed in the organisation. Teaching – that's all well and good but there is no payback in it*" (FG2-P1).

One participant felt that *"unless [the focus on metrics] changes, which it is highly unlikely to, I'd say the culture is unlikely to change"* (FG2-P1).

Industrial relations: Agreements such as the Haddington Road and Croke Park were reported, by LDOs and focus group participants alike, to be impactful on the culture surrounding teaching and learning. Changes in work and teaching loads were reported as having had an impact on both time available and morale among staff in higher education, with a knock-on impact on their willingness to engage in CPD.

> "*There is a sense of disengagement. I don't know if it's around the Haddington Road or whatever...I think staff morale isn't a high as it's been maybe five, six, seven, eight years ago*" (LDO 8)

Requirements that came as a result of these industrial agreements appear to cause some angst among staff of HEIs, but sometimes this angst is stated as a product of inefficient implementation rather than the requirements themselves.

> "*Do it properly. 90% of the staff will say I've nothing other than a welcome for enhancing my professional development but don't kick me around the place in the process or use it as a whip*" (LDO 3)

Lack of Disciplinary Guidelines for T&L CPD: A complex interaction emerged regarding some disciplinary professionals discussion of how their professional disciplinary bodies impacted on their attitudes toward engaging with CPD. Importantly, teaching and learning professionals did acknowledge the lack of disciplinary guidelines specifically regarding teaching and learning CPD for those in higher education.

Contrastingly, however, some teaching and learning professionals suggested particular disciplinary or professional backgrounds did have a subtle influence on how they unaccredited CPD was viewed. They suggested that their approach to engaging in unaccredited CPD was informed by their own disciplinary bodies in a more general sense. Their requirements from disciplinary or professional bodies supported their openness or awareness of the role CPD played in ongoing professional practice in teaching and learning.

> "*...go back to the psychology again, your CPD diaries that we're required to fill in for PSI, it's reading, it's peer supervision, it's peer support – you document absolutely everything that improves your practice so... I suppose we should... we should*" (FG4-P2)

Some of the participating LDOs highlighted that academics who were also members of professional bodies (such as in Medicine and Nursing) would have a more open attitude to CPD, but equally this might not necessarily mean that they would engage in Teaching and Learning CPD specifically (such as in Engineering).

Finally, it was the view of some teaching and learning professionals that the culture of engagement with teaching and learning in higher education in Ireland had been drifting away from valuing teaching and learning, and particularly unaccredited CPD in teaching and learning. This cultural drift over the intervening recent years had emphasised other aspects of the roles of academics within higher education and was being driven by external factors at a national and internatioOtnal level. The role of the HEA was identified as playing an important function in recognising this complex environment and developing strategic policy initiatives in addressing the role of CPD in teaching and learning at higher education. This was inclusive of the non-specific role played by unaccredited CPD in this architecture.

> *"You're talking there about a cultural shift and we've gotten very much so over the last decade towards valuing ISI above everything else and said James said, that's the currency. Now you can't just change cultural with one type of message or one type, it would be a slow process for you to add value and various different stages. And also up the perception of teaching and learning within the entire community. That's an incredibly complicated and difficult task"* (FG2-P4)

> *"I suppose the HEA would want to look at how it funds the universities. The HEA would want to put money aside specifically for that that would be and again you're looking at the mission based compact where we are expected to do this that and the other in response to get the last 5% of the budget, you'd build it in that there would be a metric that a certain % of your staff will take CPDE in teaching related topics and set a target and measure that target and that's probably the only way you can do that nationally that you could drive it, that there is a driver there that is coming in from above the university"* (FG2-P1)

4.5.2 Internal

Internal forces also influenced the provision of and the engagement with CPD with Higher Education Institutions. These internal forces can be separated into 'Top Down' and 'Bottom Up' processes. From the top down perspective, internal policy documents such as strategic plans would, in most cases, inform the objectives underpinning CPD provision. Procedures in the institution, such as performance management and programmatic review, were also seen as potential drivers of CPD provision and engagement, but the extent of the influence from these factors was seen to vary from institution to institution. Heads of Department were repeatedly highlighted as key, in many respects, to the engagement and uptake of Unaccredited CPD within institutions.

Top Down

Strategic Plan: Institutional requirements or institutional change were cited as drivers for provision of CPD. These changes could sometimes be ad-hoc, but generally we enacted from within an institutions' strategic goals. LDOs *"would draw from these particular goals and target workshops and content and particular goals for CPD"* (LDO 10). These institutional level strategic plans can also

influence a specific Teaching and Learning Strategy. Some LDOs spoke about priorities that arise 'at the core' of the university, and these arising needs may or may not be a part of the current strategic plan, but rather driving forward a current internal policy, systems change or *"if a major issue comes up"* (LDO 6). *"So if something is being talked about at the core… we'll filter that down into what we offer"* (LDO 9)

Performance Management and Progression: LDOs and focus group participants both made reference to the ways in which CPD was accounted for in Performance Management and Progression. Some LDO's and disciplinary groupings reported that engagement with CPD formed part of these assessment processes which in turn encourage staff engagement. However, the approaches to this showed significant divergences across institutions and there were also significant differences in the how its impact was viewed. The majority felt that engagement with CPD was not "*high on the agenda*" within the performance management process, with any importance being directed toward *".. accredited learning in the sense that it would be paid for and there would be certified… or a doctorate etc."* (P1-FG1)

Some felt that Performance Management was not a significant driver of engagement. There were two aspects to this view. Some participants noted that CPD engagement was not included in "*workload models*" that assessed academic activities within their institution. Nor was it given emphasis in performance management processes. As such, engagement was happening "*despite the department*" (FG1-P1) within which they worked. In contrast, others felt there was no real sanction or requirement from the recommendations that might be made as part of the Performance Management system.

> *"Performance Management … It's still there but like that was the greatest load of rubbish … if I came into [HoD]... who said look I think you need this and I said no I don't think I need it I'm fine, like some of our colleagues there is very little you can do. There is no sanction and stuff like that"* (FG3-P3)

Programmatic Review: The process of Programmatic Review was seen as something that necessitated CPD for its own sake but also the process of review would indicate where more CPD is needed. Some institutions, for example, implemented *"a mandatory set of training all about the validation process and all about programmatic review, programme design assessment"* (LDO 7).

Head of Department: The Head of Department was seen as instrumental in creating an encouraging culture of participation in Unaccredited CPD and for facilitating staff by providing opportunities for engagement in CPD. The Head of Department was highlighted as *"…the most important person in terms of the uptake of teaching learning [CPD]"* (FG1-P6) and *"key to really gaining access to and engaging people in an organisation like this"* (LDO 2)*.* Unfortunately, though, it was felt that many Heads of Department currently *"don't see it as core very often to their departmental work"* (LDO 2).

> *"When you've got a dynamic Head of Department who values the staff and who is engaging with staff and wants the staff to continuously improve those staff will engage more"* (LDO 5)

The support of organisational leaders for this kind of informal and formal culture of support for unaccredited CPD and learning was thus found to be very important.

Needs of Course: Needs often arose through the reflective examination of courses and programmes being offered by institutions. This process was, in a sense, both top-down and bottom-up as it involved staff reflecting on needs of their course provision and weaknesses that they may have identified in meeting the needs of student cohorts. Teaching and Learning professionals in these institutions would be regularly looking at *"how to align our programmes with our student's needs"* and *"stakeholders needs"* (FG3-P1).

> *"Basically I suppose the request will come from the course board. There is a need identified. So the staff will suggest look we need some CPD in the area of the following"* (FG3-P4)

There was also a strong indication that upskilling staff in the use of technological resources to support teaching and learning on particular programmes, or if there was *"upgrade in the VLE or if there is a new technology available that will drive workshops"* (LDO 11) and CPD provision. Teaching and Learning professionals in the classroom often reach out for help in this regard, particularly where programmes are utilising new technologies that "*put the fear of God in you when you're staring [at them] and you really need help"* (FG1-P3).

Interests of Academics: From a bottom up perspective, LDOs discussed how requests from Teaching and Learning Committees or individual faculty members could influence or guide choices regarding CPD provisions. Interested members of faculty would, in some instances, contact their LDO and "*say we really need x, y, z"* (LDO 1). These requests and engagement with CPD could be problem-driven where people are "*having problems with this and that then would trigger [CPD]"* (LDO 11) or interest-driven where *"you just go to the one you are interested in"* (FG4-P6). Participants within the focus groups highlighted that facilitation of CPD in peoples own areas of interest in needed to garner CPD participation.

> *"I [would] love to have extra time where I could devote myself purely to a particular interest area or skill development – absolutely"* (FG2-P4)

However, this was not the case in all institutions. In some institutions LDOs pointed out that it would not be usual for faculty to request CPD, although that option may be available ['*they're not coming looking for stuff'* (LDO 7)], and in other institutions the option of requesting CPD is not possible *"just because we don't have the resources to do that"* (LDO 9).

Commitment to improve Teaching and Learning: What became evident from focus group participants was that there are numerous staff members within HEIs that, despite the stresses and strains upon them, engage in CPD because they want to improve the teaching and learning experience for the students that they teach. They say that *"deep down…it's because we want to do it ourselves as individuals who have pride in what we do"* and to "*deliver at the top of our game"* (FG4-P2). Participants acknowledge that they have a responsibility to lead by example for the next wave of educators in higher education:

> *"we're the role models for the next generation of lecturers and teachers…So if they see us acting like lugs it's not really a good way to introduce them"* (FG4-P4)

This bottom up dynamic supporting engagement with CPD was reported often to be informal in tone, with communication links being established between those who want to learn, within department or across disciplines, according to identified needs.

> *"It does go on a lot informal... like when I started I got so much information from colleagues about how do you do this, how do you do that... someone rings you and just shows you something … you just kind of learn from other people very quickly on the job and under pressure"* (FG1-P3)

4.5.3 Local Factors

<u>Morale of Staff:</u> The morale of staff in HEIs was acknowledged to be somewhat in decline in recent times. LDOs recognise this within their institutions saying that *"the place has been very bad morale-wise with all these cut backs"* (LDO 6) and another recognising the loss of community spirit where previously *"you could literally say…'will you give us a hand with this?' And yeah, no problem I'd love to. But now people [are saying] no"* (LDO 11).

This morale shift appeared to have a knock-on impact on their willingness to engage in CPD and is also suggested to have caused a distinct turn to a *'what's in it for me?'* culture. Unless there is a distinctive personal *"value attached to it, you're under no real motivation to engage in it"* (FG2-P4). In turn, there appeared to be agreement that *"we're in a situation where CPD is something that is not high on the agenda of the academic staff individual and even collective"* (LDO 3).

<u>Additional Supports:</u> Although the previous section outlined the disengagement in CPD, it was clear from the interviews with LDOs that one-on-one support was still very necessary for some teaching staff. In fact, in some institutions this additional support is key to what LDOs or their centres do, whereas, other institution do not have the facilities or resources to sustain it, even though they recognise it as important.

> *"I think it's really important to have a centre that people know that they can go to and ask these questions"* (LDO 11)

Peer CPD may be a way for people to get this additional help from a supportive community without needing the resources of dedicated teaching and learning personnel. It was also highlighted by LDOs that learning from a peer was often more influential.

> *"…very often people may not be convinced by what we have to say. But they will be convinced if it's somebody they know… So we find that that peer learning is very, very strong"* (LDO 11)

4.5.4 Limiting Factors

<u>Academics Time:</u> The time that teaching faculty have to devote to professional development was highlighted as a limiting factor for the provision of CPD. LDOs also reiterated this point saying that *"staff are literally burnt out"* (LDO 2). Participants in the focus group felt that burden and time pressure on lecturing staff was restricting their ability to engage in CPD. Some participants expressed frustration because they don't have time to improve that teaching, even though they recognise the need to do so:

"…we prepare graduates to be the best they can be in and the method for doing that is teaching. And yet we're really saying that structurally we can't attend to the importance of that or training or development for that because of the amount of timetabled hours that we're actually doing.…" (FG1 – P6)

Academics need to feel that their limited time available is being well spent, and so this tends to shape the type of CPD provided, particularly reducing the duration further and further. LDOs are working, then, in a difficult context of trying to provide suitable CPD in short time frames: where LDOs used to provide *"day long or half day workshops"* they are now shortening this because *"people don't want that. They want to get in and out very quickly"* (LDO 8). The ultimate goal in CPD provision, then, is "*that staff will walk away saying that was two hours well spent"* (LDO 4). However, even shortening CPD sessions does not entirely solve the issue, because the increased workload also appears to increase scheduling difficulties as staff have less overlapping free time.

"..if you look at it as a department at that level if they schedule something the chances are it will clash with the majority of the staff time table" (FG1-P5)

<u>Resources, Funding and Staffing:</u> Those who provide Continuous Professional Development were also concerned about the time available they had available to do so. Funding and staffing concerns were commonly cited. LDOs explained: *"it's just so busy. There's one of me…and 500 teaching staff"* (LDO 1). This is particular problematic for those who only have an assigned number of hours to give to their LDO role and so *"everything gets very squeezed"* (LDO 2)

Funding and the provision of adequate resources to LDOs or their Centres was also a concern that was raised numerous times. LDOs lamented that they *"don't have the funding and without the funding you don't get to do a lot"* (LDO 3). There was also a fear expressed that centres that provide Teaching and Learning CPD in HEIs would be targets of budget cuts because their commitment and that a perception may exist *"they'll manage cos we know they are the type of people who will"* (LDO 8). Equally though, many participants highlighted the benefit of funding, while it was present:

"So SIF was wonderful, for the record, SIF was great and it gave us the momentum to kind of set up different things…and have speakers and to have a very structured approach to unaccredited CPD" (LDO 1)

Only one LDO took a contrary stance regarding the current funding situation, saying that there was enough money in the budgets to provide all necessary CPD.

"we have a budget and the heads of school are telling me that they have plenty of money" (LDO 5)

Summary: This section explored the data pertaining to the culture and practice among teaching and learning professionals regarding unaccredited CPD participation and activity. In doing so, both internal and external factors were delineated. Externally, policy developments, industrial relations agreements and the lack of disciplinary guidelines regarding CPD were all influential factors in driving or restricting CPD activity. Internal factors were seen to emerge in two ways: 'top down' and 'bottom up'. From a top down perspective, internal policy documents, such as strategic plans appeared to be highly influential in guiding the direction of CPD provision. Internal processes such as performance management and programmatic review were also seen as instigators of CPD provisions or, at very least, sources of requests for CPD provision. A dynamic and encouraging Head of

Department was discussed as being a vital component in creating a culture of participation in Unaccredited CPD. From the bottom up perspective, it was evident that Unaccredited CPD was often provided within institutions as a result of teaching and learning professionals reflecting on their course delivery and highlighting areas for improvement. It was recognised that staffs own areas of interest was often a motivator for engagement in CPD in that area and that their commitment to improving teaching and learning in their institution was also a factor in the engagement of staff in Unaccredited CPD.

Local factors such as staff morale and additional supports for staff were also discussed. Morale seemed to be largely impacted by workload demands but also through their interaction with other staff and particularly their Head of Department. A 'what's in it for me?' culture came to the fore, with many acknowledging that research now offered more career rewards that teaching, so CPD in the area of Teaching and Learning was not seen to be high on the agenda of many academic staff. However, despite this, there was a need for additional one-to-one support for staff on the immediate practical concerns in the classroom. Peer support was seen as one positive way of providing this support, although some LDOs saw this as important in their role also.

Finally, limitations to the provision of CPD were discussed. These were, primarily, the limited time of academic staff to engage in CPD and the limited resources of LDOs and Teaching and Learning Centres to provide for the plethora of needs that exist.

4.6 – Practical outcomes of participation in Unaccredited CPD

Introduction: This section will provide an overview of the results that emerged from across the sample of participating institutions regarding the practical outcomes or impacts of participating in non-accredited CPD. What is specifically being referred to is any assessment of the practical outcomes that participation in non-accredited CPD had on the professional practice of teaching and learning professionals or on their subsequent experience of working in higher education. This section will initially discuss the lack of assessment across the participating institutions of the practical outcomes of participating in non-accredited CPD. A number of positive outcomes of participating in non-accredited CPD will be outlined, such as the role non-accredited CPD plays in facilitating the emergence of "communities of practice" and collaborative relationships across teaching and learning professionals. Another practical outcome is the development of staff knowledge related to teaching and learning. Finally, some staff concerns or negative outcomes associated with engagement with non-accredited CPD will be discussed.

4.6.1 Lack of assessment of practical outcomes
The single most striking and important aspect of the findings in this section was that assessment of such impacts did not appear to be a priority within the institutions in the sample. The majority of LDO's interviewed clearly stated that there was not a process for assessing the impacts on staff in their institution from participating in non-accredited CPD. This is strikingly at odds with other aspects of higher education such as research outputs or the attracting of funding which are very closely monitored and supported.

A major deficit that emerged across almost all of the LDOs interviewed regarding evaluations of unaccredited CPD provision was the lack of an evaluation of the impact or effectiveness following CPD delivery. While almost all staff reported they felt that the CPD provision was probably effective

and was a positive process, they did not report being able to quantify or measure the impact of the unaccredited CPD programs they delivered:

> *[Does the institution assess or review the impact of the CPD package in any way in terms of staff performance or anything like that?]* "No. Absolutely no" (LDO 2)

> *[But in terms of how it affects their performance in class thereafter is there…]* "No and that is where I would see the deficit with... just going unaccredited" (LDO 4)

> *[Is there any mechanism by which ye assess or review the effect that the training has had on their performance officially?]* "No. The straight answer there is no" (LDO 5)

> *[Is there any mechanism by which ye assess or review the impact that the unaccredited CPD has on staff practice or performance?]* "No. We haven't really done any formal thing with the unaccredited CPD" (LDO 6)

Some LDO's interviewed defended this approach and repeated their confidence in the effectiveness of the CPD programs.

> *"When it comes to measuring success there success is just that people get on with things"* (LDO 11)

> *"I wouldn't do them if they didn't have some impact. I don't know how big the impact is"* (LDO 1)

It is important at this point to differentiate the results regarding assessment of impact of participating in non-accredited CPD from other data collected by the participating institutions from those attending CPD events. For example, while ten institutions maintained a record of the up-take of unaccredited CPD, in most instances this appears to be a basic record of attendance/numbers present. All institutions also indicated that they collected feedback during or immediately after CPD events. Indeed, some institutions highlighted that the feedback was then analysed for the purposes of assessing the benefit of the programme to their staff. It was also used for the purposes of improving the delivery of current CPD offerings and in identifying additional areas for which CPD may be required. However, none of these metric were intended to capture the impact such CPD events had on the later practice or experiences of staff.

Only one LDO indicated that their institutions collected formal data "in terms of an actual impact" but that this data had been collected "in the past" and was not contemporary (LDO 8). The results of this data was that collected using questionnaires that were administer to staff who had participated in accredited CPD programmes six months after the course had been completed and indicated that "45-48% will immediately go on to do something with what you've done within a workshop" (LDO 8). Another LDO (LDO 13) had indicated that they had conducted an independent research project exploring the impacts of engagement with non-accredited CPD, positive impacts for teaching and learning professionals. However, this research project was independent research carried out by the LDO and did not comprise a formal institutional assessment of the impacts of engagement with the non-accredited CPD programmes it offered. There were no such formal procedures for assessing the impact of non-accredited CPD programmes in LDO 13s institution.

Interestingly, while many of the LDOs interviewed agreed that participating in non-accredited CPD had positive aspects and that its impact should be assessed, " I don't have to report .. It's not sought

from me. I don't have to." (LDO 9). In some cases, LDOs provided feedback toward reviews by teaching and learning committees or other structures at the "core of the university", "I would never be asked to present that as a report for example" (LDO 9). In other words, there was not a request for outcome measures from management groups within the participating institutions regarding the impact non-accredited CPD was bringing to participating staff members.

> *Although I think that's one thing we should be doing is a report, every year an annual report. So that's somewhere the review could go so ... that's something that's been at the back of my mind and a way we could improve it to actually disseminate it to the larger college community through an annual report (LDO 6)*

However, despite the lack of formal procedure for formally assessing the impact of participating in non-accredited CPD on teaching and learning professionals, both LDOs and staff readily discussed the important impact they felt non-accredited CPD played in developing teaching and learning staff in "building up over time slowly that community of practice" (LDO 6)

4.6.2 Developing relationships and links

The creation of a shared experience and interpersonal connections among staff was identified as one of the most important impacts of engagement with non-accredited CPD. This informal "social aspect to CPD" is something that an institution "can't miss" (LDO 6) because it creates a "hub of exchange of knowledge" (FG 5- P2). As such, participation in non-accredited CPD opens up channels of "informal learning" whereby staff talk to each other on an informal basis to "get a little bit of counselling about it and you could hit ideas off each other" (FG5-P2).

Indeed, some of the LDOs discussed setting up fora within the institution, such as brown bag lunch groupings where "…we usually end up feeding people when they come because that sense of the common touch of giving them literally the cup of tea and coffee and a sandwich and that .. you know there is and that's one of the things I'm going to be challenged with online trying create the community in practice that way" (LDO 6).

Some disciplinary professionals went as far as suggesting that these interpersonal relationships that they develop as an outcome of engagement with non-accredited CPD were more important to them than the actual content of the training workshop itself. "And I do think the whole collegial and what you're getting from all the people in the room with you is more important ... but that's what's it's about" (FG5-P1). The opportunity to do training with colleagues was "nice" because It offered the opportunity to meet other colleagues and "learn so much about [them]"(FG5-P2).

> *And everyone goes to the talk. That's why you're supposed to be there and that's what you can write on your form in the college and say we're going to listen to this expert but actually it's the chat and it's the d'you know what, I've a lovely bank of multiple choice questions and a little bit of exchange of ideas.. what works, what doesn't, what's the difference between first year economics and fourth year economics. Very informal. Very collegial and it works great (FG5-P2)*

More formal arrangements were also in place in some institutions whereby less experienced staff were paired with more experience colleagues in mentoring supportive linkages. One participant discussed being "matched with a more senior lecturer" whereby they would meet for "informal ..

Coffee or whatever" (FG5-P2). Such meetings allowed participants to seek advice and "survival" skills "to make your job as a lecturer easier" (FG5-P2). Participants found this "brilliant" and something that have "gotten so much out of it. I got so many ideas out of it, so many pointers" (FG6-P3).

4.6.3 Teaching and learning knowledge development

However, many teaching and learning professionals discussed the impacts engagement with non-accredited CPD had on developing their own personal knowledgebase. For some participants, this was the primary impact that motivated them to participate in non-accredited CPD as "if I'm doing this for myself I'm not getting anything out of it other that knowledge" (FG5-P2).

While many of the disciplinary professionals outlined ways in which accredited and non-accredited CPD informed their disciplinary professional knowledge, many also felt that a "fundamental reason for CPD, credited or unaccredited CPD is that it informs teaching" (FG7-P1). Engagement with non-accredited CPD supported the development of "flexibility, speed of movement, speed of reaction, open mindedness, up to datedness, that kind of "nowness" is definitely much more available in non-accredited CPD than in accredited" (FG7-P1). Participants also emphasised the role non-accredited CPD played in supporting technological upskilling related to teaching and learning, because "actually technologies underpin that 30 or 40% of people's time that they spend teaching" (FG6-P3).

In addition, however, participants also suggested that participation in non-accredited CPD developed competencies beyond acquisition of knowledge. It also "really stimulates you in that sense it really stimulates you to think outside the box as well" (FG6-P2). This challenging element of CPD participation is complemented by also giving "a vocabulary as well I think to articulate clearly. A lot of things we already know from experience of teaching but you maybe don't have the vocabulary to express it in formal vocabulary I suppose" (FG6-P3). Some participants also felt there was an affective support in the CPD also "encourages you because it reinforces what you're doing. like gives you a mechanism to be able to ... evaluate how you're doing things" (FG6-P2). Overall, engagement with "CPD I think feeds into and improves you"(FG5-P2).

4.6.4 Negative outcomes:

In contrast to many of the positive aspects discussed up this point however, some participants felt that there were negative aspects to participating in non-accredited CPD. Many of these points related to the very busy workload reported by many of the teaching and learning professionals who participated in this study. With regard to participating in non-accredited CPD participants discussed the costs to them they felt were entailed from taking part in courses. If courses covered relevant material, many participants reported experiencing stress and pressure related to time lost to their job duties.

I think I had five days in the last two weeks on these non-accredited training… Which all were very interesting but now I'm completely stressed out because I have so much to do for next Tuesday. It's a pity because I can't even follow up on those things now (FG5-P3).

This suggests that supports to free up time for participation may support the quality of staff engagement. While some participant reported that the course material from non-accredited cpd courses may be very relevant, they felt pressure "to actually go and learn to this, because I just need to get over that hump and you just go and do it" (FG6-P3).This leads some staff to do courses but

"you don't think much about then" (FG5-P3). There were also logistical challenges travelling to attend sessions offered in different geographical areas.

Overall, therefore, some participants felt that participating in non-accredited CPD was "sharpening a stick that I am going to be beaten with this time next year" because it was taking time and focus away from more clearly measured aspects of their job (FG5-P2). They felt that this was something that would block them meeting targets set in forums like the PMDS with their heads of departments. This may have an impact on teaching and learning professionals' career progression or job satisfaction into the future.

Summary: The most important finding in the section is that the overwhelming majority of the participating institutions did not have any procedures for assessing the practical outcomes or impacts for participating in non-accredited CPD. Learning outcomes for the unaccredited CPD programmes offered in the majority of institutions were not provided. One institution has assessed the impact on teaching and learning practices of participating in non-accredited CPD in the past and found that between 40 -50% of participants utilised learning from CPD in their later professional practice.

For teaching and learning professionals in the area, they saw a benefit in terms of developing their own competencies and skills. Participants were also identified the development of links and collaborations with other colleagues as an important practical outcome of engaging with non-accredited CPD. The development of informal communities of practice or more formal mentoring relationships was identified as being very important in supporting staff development and evolving teaching and learning practices.

A less positive practical outcome of engaging unaccredited CPD identified by many teaching and learning professionals was that they had less time to direct toward other aspects of their role as academics. This was having a negative impact on their potential career progression as they reported other aspects of their role were given greater weight in interview or progression settings

4.7. – Future Needs and Suggestions for future improvements
Introduction: This section was specifically concerned with the final research question sought to identify the unaccredited CPD training needs for teaching and learning professionals in the future? There were a range of suggestions offered by LDOs and academic staff for the advancement of engagement with Unaccredited CPD in Ireland. What came to the fore, however, was a desire for professional recognition of engagement with CPD. This was echoed in the views of teaching and learning professionals across a number of the disciplinary groupings who felt that the creation of a pathway toward recognition or accreditation of commitment in CPD was important for the development of teaching and learning in higher education.

To some, this meant suggesting a move to accredited programmes as requirement, whereas others felt that there could exist some system that would allow for recognition and accumulation of Unaccredited CPD in order to achieve some status or certification or acknowledgement. Not matter what guise was suggested, the key argument remained – people deserve recognition for the CPD they engage in.

This section will discuss the suggestions for future training needs and supports to facilitate engagement with unaccredited CPD into the future. These suggestions will be discussed under three thematic headings. Firstly, initiatives at a national level to support engagement, followed by initiatives at an institutional level. Finally, suggested initiatives from disciplinary professional bodies are suggested.

4.7.1 - At a National Level:

At a national level, three separate areas of development were suggested. The first was a National framework for the professional recognition of ongoing engagement with unaccredited CPD that would provide a nationally recognised approach for recognising professional development. The second suggestion was the support of increased national inter-institutional collaborations in the area of unaccredited CPD. There were two lined aspects to this which were, firstly, a national directory of expertise in teaching and learning across higher education and, secondly, a national repository of teaching and learning materials, pedagogical approaches and other such resources that was openly accessed. Finally, there were suggestions regarding the way in which the HEA allocates its funding of universities. It was suggested that explicitly linking levels of engagement with CPD among teaching and learning staff within HEI would have an impact on levels of engagement into the future.

1)   National Framework for Profession Recognition:

It was suggested a nationally coordinated framework for accreditation would provide a clear statement of value and recognition for engagement with unaccredited CPD. *"I think the framework has to be one that provides in my view professional recognition"* (LDO 3). Engagement with CPD was recognised as supporting professional development and as a form of engagement with the profession of teaching and learning. All LDO's felt that this engagement needed to be supported but did not necessarily feel that it all needed to be accredited. *"I think it's just about recognition"*(LDO 5) rather than accreditation, "..a*t the moment it's too be a distinction between unaccredited and accredited. Maybe we should have something like Certificates of Participation"* (LDO 2)

> *"I don't necessarily think it has to be accredited. I think it has to be recognised. It has to be recognisable...so it doesn't necessarily have to have credit bearing"* (LDO 10)

This emphasis on 'recognition' of engagement with CPD was felt to be important as it "*allowed people put something on their C.V..*". (LDO 5) while also "*allowing people to accumulate a blast of little bits and pieces*" (LDO 3). Such an approach would meet the need of staff who "*want acknowledgement of doing it. Whether you'd still call that then unaccredited I don't know but it might be accredited differently" (LDO 6).*

> *"I mean that could be presented in more flexible learning so that you can do it while ... and even if it was accredited at the end that you have that kind of benefit. It's more like a carrot than a stick that you can at least at the end if you put in the hours you have something to show"* (FG1-P4)

Both LDO's and staff discussed such framework as transcending the accredited/unaccredited divide in CPD and emphasised the need for flexibility. One approach that was suggested for structuring a national framework for recognition of engagement with CPD would be using portfolios of both

unaccredited and accredited CPD completed. Such an approach would *'.. create an award that would allow somebody to bank the work that they have done .. over the years and for that to count for something – be it an academic award…A fellowship'* (FG3-P4). Such a structure would possibly suit a cross disciplinary framework structure *"..because different ways of engaging in professional development would suit different people.."* (FG3-P2). However, such a national framework would also allow *"on the one hand have the freedom of the local setting to identify a CPD model that suited them and on the other the national level that they could plug in to a bigger picture…that we have a national language as it were whereby we can all plug in to certain things"* (LDO 6).

However, some teaching and learning professionals suggested cautioned would be necessary as there would be significant diversity to such approaches to toward accrediting or codifying unaccredited CPD. The more flexible the pathways of unaccredited CPD, the more difficult it might be to establish standardisation of learning and metrics for assessing expertise. I think *"if you have engaged in some sort of sustained endeavour which now codified... I think that's always going to be the problem with unaccredited is codifying it in some way like that"* (FG3-P4).

> *"I think the insight you gain from the CPD should be credited more than just the CPD because we could all attend and tick boxes at twenty CPD events throughout the year and you mightn't show capacity to actually apply that to your current situation. .. it's about being able to join those dots and show where it's actually...otherwise it could just be a case of … box ticking"* (FG2-P3)

This clarifies that what is being suggested is not necessarily a framework for tying unaccredited CPD into accredited frameworks, but rather outlining a flexible portfolio approach to recognising and providing a metric of ongoing engagement with CPD. Such an approach had the advantage of allowing autonomy in the selection of content to be selected and individual guiding of development.

> *"A portfolio on different stages. So if you're gonna do unaccredited and accredited bits and pieces here and there and everywhere which you can .. put them all in and what it will simply say is so you're not actually going to get any accreditation what it says is there is a National Framework for professional development and it says that [names colleague].. you're kind of about here. You know. Which is kind of good to know and it means it's nationally translatable"* (LDO 10)

2)   *Collaboration*:

The concept of collaboration and preventing needless repetition was reiterated by LDOs and disciplinary professionals, who said that there is a need for *"structure and more joined up thinking"* (LDO 7) and *"room to do more joint ventures"* or *"regional clusters"* (LDO

> *"I think we're wasting our time at institutional level. It has to be at national level. Because to have serious currency... I really fear if we only do it by an institution basis, we need something...UK have a national [network]..."* (FG3-P4)

Such a collaborative network might function as a way identifying strengths and expertise across the higher education system and was conceived of as *".. maybe a sort of an almost directory of who's good on that particular area"* (LDO 11). Additional supports or funding schemes might be put in

place to foster collaborations in an organic fashion, availing of the cluster structures already in place or disciplinary commonalities. It might also be possible that if such a collaborative structure was initiated it could be managed or directed on an ongoing basis *"…a bit like Wikipedia you don't need one guru managing the whole lot. You've everybody actually chipping in and updating it"* (LDO 3)

A number of LDOs suggested having an online a *"national repository"* which would act as a huge resource centre, a place to do CPD online, find upcoming events, and find contact details for people who are willing to provide CPD on particular topics. Such an approach was felt to have the advantage of allowing teaching and learning professionals to *"..view what was going on in every place. … where I can dip in and say oh great they are doing that there"* (LDO 5)

> *"It would be as if the HEA net here in Ireland kind of said ok we'll put in a whole support. So everything from your how to do something. How to make a video right down to IP copy write down to the most effective pedagogical way of using video in your education sector, a whole suite of things that they do"* (LDO 8)

3)   Role of HEA:

Finally, it was the view of some teaching and learning professionals that the culture of engagement with teaching and learning in higher education in Ireland had been drifting away from valuing teaching and learning, and particularly unaccredited CPD in teaching and learning. The role of the HEA was identified as playing an important function in recognising this complex environment and developing strategic policy initiatives in addressing the role of CPD in teaching and learning at higher education.

> *"I suppose the HEA would want to look at how it funds the universities. The HEA would want to put money aside specifically for that that would be and again you're looking at the mission based compact where we are expected to do this that and the other in response to get the last 5% of the budget, you'd build it in that there would be a metric that a certain % of your staff will take CPDE in teaching related topics and set a target and measure that target and that's probably the only way you can do that nationally that you could drive it, that there is a driver there that is coming in from above the university"* (FG2-P1)

4.7.2 –At an Institutional Level:

At an institutional level, it was emphasised that a more coherent approach to fostering engagement with unaccredited CPD would have a positive impact into the future. However, the participants emphasised that a multifaceted approach would be most effective in engaging all strata of management and staff within higher education institutions to 'buy-in' to unaccredited professional development and support institutional engagement.

Firstly, at a management level, participants identified that more overt and explicit "*management commitment towards it*" (LDO 11) would foster a clearer understanding of the institutional importance of CPD engagement among staff. While mention might be made in strategic plans or policy documents regarding a commitment to supporting continuing professional development among academic staff, this did not always translate into clear practical action. Some teaching and learning staff felt that requirement for levels of engagement with unaccredited CPD would need to

be mandated from a management level within institutional HR policies. In essence, staff "..*contracts should contain absolutely mandatory requirements that so many hours of CPD*" (FG3-P2) and this would clearly signal a commitment toward engagement with CPD by the HE institution. It was acknowledged that this would be "*imposing it*" on staff, which might have some negative outcomes, some staff felt that "*maybe you need to impose it to start*" (FG3-P2).

It was suggested that management in HEIs might be supported in developing a greater understanding of the importance or teaching and learning CPD for staff development and in supporting on-going teaching quality.

> "*…rather than focusing all our development work on people who are teaching there might be CPD required for managers in terms of what they consider to be important, how they're going to support and incentivise staff*" (LDO 4)

LDOs also recognised the importance of management actively encouraging engagement in CPD, and this included systematic encouragements, such as acknowledging Unaccredited CPD in academic progression. However, such 'encouragement' would need to be explicitly clear to staff in order to impact effectively on staff perceptions of CPD's importance for their role. For example, "*…when it comes to promotion opportunities it would be nice if the unaccredited CPD could be recognised as part of that*" (LDO 11). This would also include the inclusion of engagement with CPD within assessment of workload among staff in HEIs, providing a clear message of value and financial support for engagement with unaccredited forms of CPD.

> "*So what could be done in a tangible sense will be to actually get people to document what CPD they are doing. so for example promotions, the full economic costing could place emphasis on it. You could have a section for it... well there is a part in the PDRS but you're required to engage in any of the stuff*" (FG2-P1)

Greater understanding among management of the role CPD played in supporting academic staff professional practice and the role it played in meeting institutional strategic goals was felt to be important. It would have an impact on the value management attached to engagement with CPD and guide the allocation of resources to support such engagement among staff.

> "*But to try to even development the relationship and I try to and I do a lot of under the radar stuff with students. But to try to develop that culture that we treat our students as customers that what P2 or [names P4] or [names P1] do with that student is equally recognised as [Names P3] publishing something in x, y, or z*" (FG3-P3)

At a departmental level,

> "*…that would be great but I think you could begin even at a much more localised level at each department actually mapping out its own teaching and learning needs where everybody in then for the next five years who are looking at x number of programmes...there are the kind of new modules*" (FG1-P6).

4.7.3 –At Professional Bodies Level:

Across the sample of participants there were suggestions that future developments in unaccredited CPD should be also influenced by existing models among disciplinary professional bodies. Some LDOs made comparisons to professional bodies who require their members to undertake CPD as an expectation of good practice and a requirement of their registration. This did not necessarily mean professional accreditation, but rather a professional development expectation. Some disciplinary groupings such as accountants or solicitors had "*professional bodies*" that required members to "*to attend certain courses every year. There is no accreditation for it but there is a professional expectation*" (LDO 2).

However, other participants pointed out that the model most often used in the domain of education was for staff to have explicit "*professional accreditation*" in order to fill a teaching and learning roll which "*would drive more of those credits for training*" (FG1-P3). Some participants pointed to other sectors of the education sector and pointed out that "*you can't teach at second level, you can't teach at primary level without a teaching accreditation*" (FG3-P2). As such some participants felt that the only way to drive professional standards among staff in higher education in relation to professional development would be to follow such an approach. "*I would see huge need cross sector for a formal teaching and learning accreditation*" (FG3-P2).

It was noted by a number of participants that that a lack of external professional guidelines led to a situation whereby "*..professionalism at the moment is internal – there isn't a registration process for a professional approach to being a professional lecturer and to maintain those standards*" (FG3-P2). Some LDOs felt there was scope for the creation of a professional body for higher education lecturers or teachers. This approach was contrasted with what was viewed as the current arrangement where

> "*I think myself, my personal view would be this that we should be looking at establishing a collegiate group. In other words THEI Teachers of Higher Education in Ireland professional body, become accredited to it, get that groups to establish criteria by which they would actually give you RD members, Fellowship, Senior Fellowship or whatever it is*" (LDO 3)

This view was echoed among teaching and learning professionals who felt that strengthening of guidelines and encouragement for engaging with unaccredited CPD was of primary importance in supporting continued professionalism in teaching and learning in higher education institution in Ireland. Some felt that this should be something that teaching and learning professionals should "*…take ownership as a body of staff for their own professional development*" , suggesting this would "*be a sign of mass professionalism to take ownership*" (FG3-P2).

Summary: The results discussed in this sections were relevant to the final research question that sought to explore the unaccredited CPD training needs for teaching and learning professionals in the future? The results that emerged from both the interviews with the LDOs and the focus groups with teaching and learning professionals broadly fell into three thematic categories; National, Institutional, and Disciplinary Professional. These themes were discussed in the form of suggested initiatives or reforms that emerged from the discussions of the participants and comprised some of their ideas about how their need might be met into the future.

At a national level, participants suggested that an agreed and standardised national framework for the "recognition" of unaccredited CPD completed would make a valuable contribution. Importantly,

not all participants equated professional recognition for completed unaccredited CPD with accreditation. Rather, it was suggested that flexible portfolio approach to measuring or assessing CPD completed that could lead toward a professional award in recognition of expertise in teaching in learning might be effective in supporting professional recognition, such as a fellowship for example. Other teaching and learning professionals, however, felt that professional *accreditation* was the standard approach to recognising professional competence in teaching and learning across other sections of education. They felt that such an approach should also be instituted for third level.

Additionally, it was also suggested that adjustments to the way in which HEIs are funded from the HEA might also be useful in stimulating greater level of engagement. For example, if levels of teaching and learning staff engagement with unaccredited CPD was a target metric that was then used to make as assessment of levels of funding a specific institution received from the HEA, this might focus institutional strategically on developing such levels among their staff.

Lastly, national support structure to foster collaborative links between and across institutions were also suggested as possible future directions. Specifically, mentioned was the creation of a national directory of expertise in particular forms of teaching and learning approaches that could be used to source expertise and develop collaboration. Another suggestion was the development of an open access national repository of materials and demonstrations of approaches to teaching and learning in higher education.

At an institutional level, participant identified ways in which management and management practices within institutions could be developed to support engagement with unaccredited CPD. These ranged from using clauses in employment contracts and policies to mandate levels of engagement from staff to providing management with specific trainings to deepen their understanding of the role unaccredited CPD played in meeting teaching and learning strategic goals. All participants felt that there should be explicit measurement of levels of engagement in unaccredited CPD within the processes for assessing career progression and promotion.

Finally, participants identified a potential role for disciplinary professional bodies in supporting future levels of engagement with unaccredited CPD. Some participants suggested using existing models of how particular professional bodies provide clear guidelines for levels of engagement with CPD per your but don't necessarily "accredit" these trainings. However, other participants felt strongly that professional disciplinary bodies in other sectors of education insist on levels of accreditation prior to and during professional practice in teaching and learning. Such participants felt that this approach should also be followed in Third level. A final suggestion was that teaching and learning professionals should form a "collegiate group" that would set criterial levels to provide awards for levels of engagement in CPD, such as fellowships.

5.0 – Synthesis and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction:

This exploratory study set out to investigate the range, depth and typologies of provision of unaccredited continuing professional development (CPD) training to teaching and learning professionals across a sample of higher educational contexts in the Republic of Ireland. It also sought to explore the culture among teaching and learning professionals toward participation in CPD training and the effect this has on their professional practice in higher education.

13 LDOs and 28 teaching and learning professionals from 13 different Higher Education Institutions in the Republic of Ireland shared their thoughts, feelings and experiences of Unaccredited CPD with the researchers of this study. While many common themes became evident, so too did a diversity of opinion. The challenge, then, has been to express this diversity of opinion, while also ascertaining some clear directions for action. In this section a summary and set of conclusions will be provided, as well as some suggestions for future improvement.

5.2 Summary of Research Findings:

The overarching **Aims of Unaccredited CPD**, across institutions, are noted to be intrinsically tied to the institutional strategic plans, which are themselves explicitly influenced by the national policies for higher education in Ireland. Aims were identified as *'improving student experience'*, '*increasing student retention'* and '*developing staff'*. These align closely with some of the strategic objectives for higher education institutions identified nationally through the Hunt Report (2011) and European wide through the E4 group (European Commission, 2013) and the European Standards and Guidelines (2015). CPD in the teaching and learning, inclusive of unaccredited CPD, appears to be identified as a way of supporting the achievement of these strategic goals. As such, in line with the vision of the Hunt report (2011), CPD in teaching and learning has a role in meeting strategic objectives and supporting access to ongoing funding for the higher education institutions from within the participating sample.

The varied nature of **institutional structures** across the sample was an important consideration in interpreting how non-accredited CPD was designed, delivered, engaged with and viewed by participants in the current study. For example, Institutional strategic plans were identified as being very important in guiding provision of Unaccredited CPD. This is perhaps unsurprising given the emphasis on developing clear institutional strategic plans across Irish Higher Education that closely align with nationally targeted strategic objectives (Hunt et al., 2011). However, some LDOs felt that there was a 'loose', 'ad-hoc' and unclear strategic approach, where unaccredited CPD was used to 'mop-up' and address 'particular fires' or needs that emerged. Indeed, the majority of the institutions did not have a specific institutional plan for the development of CPD, a finding that runs contrary to the recent High Level Group Report on the Modernisation of Higher Education (European Commission, 2013:27) which suggests that all institutions should "develop and implement a strategy for the support and on-going improvement of the quality of teaching and learning, devoting the necessary level of human and financial resources to the task, and integrating this priority in its overall mission, giving teaching due parity with research". This, in turn, was perceived by staff as an implicit message regarding the importance that institutions place on engagement with CPD. This was viewed in contrast to the very specific and metric driven approach adopted toward other strategic targets, such as research output. Teaching and learning participants in this study were keenly aware of the level of oversight of other aspects of strategic plans and institutional compacts and were very clear about the messages they received regarding other aspects of their role. This, in turn, appeared

to influence staff who felt that they needed to focus on other aspects of their role in order to foster their own career progression opportunities. This finding resonates with the emphasis on clear institutional supports for teaching and learning development and engagement from the E4 groups' recent report on the modernisation of Higher Education (European Commission, 2013).

An important finding was that there was significant diversity in institutional structures across the sample. This is very much in line with the findings of previous research regarding teaching and learning CPD provision in Ireland (National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 2015). Some institutions have dedicated teaching and learning centres, while other institutions have an individual with a limited amount of time per week to be assigned to the role. Other offices and organisations within some institutions also had responsibility and budgets for CPD delivery. This division of labour sometimes led to issues with coordination, funding and replication of CPD.

While addressing the first research question regarding the **Range and Typologies** of Unaccredited CPD, five distinct categories emerged from the data. These where '*Digital Capacity*', '*Pedagogy*', '*Assessment*', '*Academic Development*', and '*Curriculum Design*'. These typologies are similar to those recently identified for accredited CPD provision in Ireland (National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 2015).

Digital Capacity CPD aims to develop professional competencies using specific software & competencies in technology enhanced learning, teaching and assessment. *Pedagogy* CPD is primarily concerned with specific pedagogical approaches and personal teacher development skills, but also includes student diversity and developing student's personal competencies. CPD surrounding *Assessment* focuses on developing individual and group assessment strategies and also includes assessment administration strategies. *Academic Development* CPD is primarily for maintaining academic standards and developing on skills particularly relevant for academics and their work. This also includes research supervision. Finally, *Curriculum Design* CPD includes initial curriculum design, evaluation and improvement.

The results of the survey, completed by LDOs, indicates that the majority of CPD programmes offered were in the area of digital capacity (43%) and pedagogy (28%). In contrast, a minimal amount of programmes are offered in the areas of assessment (9%) and curriculum design (5%). However, not all institutions offered the same amount of CPD in each area. In fact, there was a wide variation in the type of CPD that was made available in each institution. For example, some institutions provided only one instance of CPD for the area of Digital Capacity, whereas other institutions offered up to 16 different Digital Capacity CPD opportunities. CPD opportunities ranged in all other identified areas also: Pedagogy (1-10); Assessment (0-5); Academic Development (1-10); Curriculum Design (0-3). This shows that the level of support provided to professionals across institutions to up-skill and develop themselves as professionals through unaccredited CPD varies greatly.

There was also variety in the forms of Unaccredited CPD that were on offer including workshops, conferences, courses, seminars, summer schools, and online sessions. Peer observation and feedback was also discussed as another form of Unaccredited CPD, although this can focus on any topic of a person's teaching, and so is not as easily classified as other instances of CPD.

In relation to the second research question, the **Uptake of CPD** across institutions was not found to be well monitored. While some records of participation do exist, these records are varied in their level of detail and analysis. This approach to monitoring engagement and participation contrast with the approaches typical of accredited forms of CPD in higher education and is perhaps understandable given the greater level of diversity inherent with non-accredited forms of CPD (National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 2015).

In some institutions, uptake of unaccredited CPD is recorded as a basic count of attendance/numbers present while in other institutions record names of those who participate. Sometimes the attendance records are entered into a larger database which then can produce a number of different types of reports (by individual, by department, etc.) but this did not appear to be commonplace and it is clear that there is a level of variability in approaches to monitoring. While all institutions gathered feedback of some sort, only one had any measure of the effectiveness or impact that unaccredited CPD had for staff who participated in such programmes. Research question 2 also sought to identify any patterns regarding the uptake of unaccredited CPD and explore how different disciplinary groupings engaged with CPD. Given that all but one of the participating HEIs did not maintain data regarding patterns of engagement across disciplinary groupings, it is not possible to make specific findings in this regard.

However, anecdotal evidence gathered through interviews revealed a trend, across most institutions, of decreasing numbers attending unaccredited CPD in recent years. While there are some exceptions to this trend, such as PhD supervision CPD for example, significant variability in attendance levels were reported, where attendance was being recorded. Teaching and learning professionals suggested there was a lack of clarity regarding the role of unaccredited CPD and they felt unclear regarding how much value was attached to their participation in such programmes. This finding is important given the importance ascribed to "top-down approaches to institutional leadership" in supporting engagement with teaching and learning in higher education at a European level (European Commission, 2013). In the context of the current study, there was a strong feeling expressed by many participants that CPD, and particularly unaccredited CPD, was not clearly measured within rankings and strategic planning across higher education institutions and so implicitly CPD was not an encouraged priority. This might be described as a failure of institutional leadership through failure to clearly express messages regarding the importance and role of non-accredited CPD which clearly negatively influencing the importance teaching and learning professionals ascribed it across the sample of participating institutions.

Discussion surrounding the third research question, examining **Culture and Practices,** was separated into 'external' and 'internal'. The internal discussion is further separated into 'top down' and 'bottom up' influences, which provides a detailed exploration of culture and practices. This mirrors the dichotomy of top-down and bottom-up forms of institutional leadership from the "High Level Group on the Modernisation of Higher Education" (European Commission, 2013). In the current study, it is clear that these factors play a significant role in provision of and engagement in CPD within institutions. However, the role of Head of Department was indicated to be exceptionally important in mediating the influence both top-down and bottom-up processes had on the teaching and learning culture within a department. This result echoes the finding of the findings from the "Departmental Leadership of Teaching in Research-Intensive Environments" report by Gibbs (2009)

that found heads of department were very influential on the development of teaching and learning practices and culture within higher education settings internationally.

From an institutional perspective, the purpose of CPD was often stated to be concerned with enhancing the student experience through supporting staff to teach in innovative and effective ways. It was understood that student engagement and retention would be influenced as a result of staff engagement with this CPD. Therefore, CPD provision has formed a part of institutions strategic plans in the majority of institutions in order to achieve these goals. This suggests that Institutional strategic plans are guiding decisions regarding non-accredited CPD offerings as envisioned by the Hunt Report (2011). However, internal processes such as performance management and programmatic review were also seen as instigators of CPD provisions or, at very least, sources of requests for CPD provision. Importantly, however, many teaching and learning professionals who participated in the current study did not feel that engagement with non-accredited was given weight within performance review processes or career progression assessments. In another example, teaching and learning professionals described a very detailed institutional work load assessment procedure that did not allocate any space for including engagement with CPD, which participants felt clearly communicated the institutions lack of commitment to staff CPD engagement. These examples run contrary to the emphasis in inclusion of engagement with teaching and learning CPD being included in progression assessment and performance management procedures for academic staff in higher education in the High Level Group Report on the Modernisation of Higher Education (European Commission, 2013)

In line with the dual importance of "bottom-up institutional leadership" in the High Level Groups report on the modernisation of higher education (2013:26), the role of Head of Department was identified, by LDOs and teaching and learning professionals alike, as being highly influential on the levels of engagement among staff within particular institutions. The values and objectives of differing heads of department was felt to explain much of the local variability in engagement in unaccredited CPD identified in this study. The encouragement and facilitation for engagement in CPD, as well as the general culture surrounding it, was felt, at least in part, to be a product of the Head of Department's words and actions – whether explicit or implicit, intentional or unintentional. Local factors such as staff morale and available additional supports appear to influence engagement in unaccredited CPD.

Within institutions a cultural drift has been identified that leads away from the teaching and learning role that academics hold with academics citing pressures to attend to other facets of their roles. Professionals in the area have found it increasingly difficult to attend CPD programmes due to constraints on their time due to teaching and research. In effect, if they do not see a particular time/cost benefit to themselves they will not attend. As such, a culture of professional development for the sake of professional development was not viewed as an appropriate buy-in to attend programmes. This is concerning given the importance the High Level placed rewarding teaching skills among staff and providing clear incentives for rewarding "(e.g. through fellowships or awards) higher education teachers who make a significant contribution to improving the quality of teaching and learning, whether through their practice, or through their research into teaching and learning" (European Commission, 2013:37). Disciplinary professionals and LDOs suggested that greater clarity regarding incentives for attending programmes would be a benefit in supporting engagement into the future.

"The senior management need to spread the message that effective, learning focused teaching is expected from all staff (not just the enthusiasts), and to promote this message systematically, connecting it clearly to institutional priorities." (European Commission, 2013:26)

The fourth research questions sought to examine the **Practical Outcomes of CPD**, however learning outcomes were not provided for the majority of the unaccredited CPD programmes across the institutions. This mirrors the diversity and multifaceted nature of non-accredited CPD from previous research in the area (The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 2015). Even though professionals who engaged in CPD often spoke of a benefit in terms of developing their own competencies and skills, the practical outcomes of unaccredited CPD programmes are generally not identified or measured.

Importantly, only one of the participating institutions had any procedures in place to assess the practical outcomes or impact of participating in non-accredited CPD on its staff. While the results of the assessment were good, suggesting that approximately 50% of participants incorporated training material into their future teaching and learning practice, the assessment had only been carried out once a number of years in the past. In effect, none of the other LDOs had any procedures in place to collect data on outcomes for professional practice from participating in non-accredited CPD. Interestingly, there also reported that they were not requested for such data from the institutions in which they worked, which again contrasts with the emphasis on measurement or progress associated with other strategic goals in higher education institution.

However, there was significant anecdotal evidence regarding a number of important practical outcomes that participants identified from participating in non-accredited CPD. Many participants suggested that one of the most important practical outcomes was the development of professional links, collaborations and communities of practice with other colleagues within their institutions. Such informal relationships were a significant support for many participants in fostering development of teaching and learning and were augmented by the development of more formal mentoring relationships with more senior professionals. This aligns with the emphasis on a holistic developing trajectory for teaching and learning professionals that emphasises the "soft-skills" associated with effective pedagogy as well as academics knowledge base (European Commission, 2013).

It should also be noted that many participants did readily acknowledge that participation in non-accredited CPD was effective in developing their knowledge regarding teaching and learning. In particular, the targeted and specific nature of many aspects of non-accredited forms of CPD lent themselves well to effective replication in the classroom according to many participants. However, another practical outcome of engaging unaccredited CPD identified by many teaching and learning professionals was that they had less time to direct toward other aspects of their role as academics. This was having a negative impact on their potential career progression as they reported other aspects of their role were given greater weight in interview or progression settings. Many professionals suggested that the lack of clarity regarding acknowledgement for participation in CPD influenced their decisions regarding whether to participate in CPD, and in particular unaccredited CPD.

Both LDOs and teaching and learning professionals saw potential benefits for greater linkages between accredited and unaccredited CPD in higher education and felt this would provide clarity and transparency regarding incentives for engagement.

5.3 Suggestions for Future Directions:

The final research question sought to explore the unaccredited CPD training needs for teaching and learning professionals in the future. As outlined in section 4.7, this research study has highlighted some issues regarding Unaccredited CPD for which there are a number of suggestions provided by participants. There are some key areas which are felt to be of importance for future development. These can be discussed at National, Institutional and the Professional Body levels.

On a **national level**, a need was communicated for a National framework for the professional recognition of ongoing engagement with unaccredited CPD. This would provide a nationally recognised approach for recognising professional development. Previous reviews of existing international models for professional development frameworks suggest the establishment of collaborative relationships between national bodies and individual institutions are of importance when supporting professional development, identifying professional development needs and goals (National Forum of the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 2015). However, studies of existing models for professional development in the UK have emphasised the importance of clear systems for monitoring and evaluation of CPD progression in supporting the sustainability, relevance and clarity of national frameworks. However, of most concern in the context of non-accredited CPD, many existing international models for supporting professional development do not "explicitly mention a means for individuals to specialise in topics of interest to their particular teaching practice" (National Forum of the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 2015:23).

Further to this, participants discussed a need for support in promoting inter-institutional collaboration in the area of unaccredited CPD. This could be strengthened by the creation a national directory of expertise in teaching and learning across higher education and an open access national repository of teaching and learning materials, pedagogical approaches and other such resources. There were also suggestions regarding the way in which the HEA allocates its funding to institutions. It was suggested that explicitly linking levels of engagement with CPD among teaching and learning staff within the HEI should have an impact on levels of engagement into the future.

On an **institutional level**, there were many references to a need for management commitment, clear practical action on strategic plans and systematic encouragement surrounding CPD. Buy-in from senior management and other important stakeholders have been identified as being of particular importance in supporting the development of national frameworks for CPD (National Forum of the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 2015). The recent report from the High Level Group on "The modernization of Higher Education" (2013) particularly specified the need for senior management to "to spread the message that effective, learning focused teaching is expected from all staff (not just the enthusiasts), and to promote this message systematically, connecting it clearly to institutional priorities" (European Commission, 2013:26).

The creation of roles to support the co-ordination and sourcing of CPD within institutions was also felt to be important in supporting future engagement among teaching and learning professionals. It

was a clear message across participants that Teaching and Learning Centres were important in supporting staff engagement. Additionally, the Head of Departments within departments across higher education institutions should be given clear messages regarding the value attached to participating in unaccredited CPD. Funding and greater local autonomy to identify and source CPD was also suggested as a way of fostering greater efficiencies and engagement with CPD into the future.

How institutions were to clearly progress their support of staff engagement with teaching and learning CPD, however, was a contested area among participants in the current study. For some, this meant including a mandatory requirement for CPD within contracts and policy documents, and that "continuous professional education as teachers should become a requirement for teachers in the higher education sector" (European Commission, 2013:31). On balance, however, other participants resisted the idea that CPD be imposed upon them in this way. CPD for managers was mentioned as an important facet of increasing their understanding of the importance of CPD for teaching staff. Acknowledging engagement in unaccredited CPD in promotion and progression processes could be one way to provide systematic encouragement. However, such 'encouragement' would need to be explicitly clear to staff in order to impact effectively on staff perceptions of CPD's importance for their role. This aligns with the recommendations of the High Level Group report whose recommendation 5 suggested that "academic staff entrance, progression and promotion decisions should take account of an assessment of teaching performance alongside other factors" (European Commission, 2013:33).

Regarding **Professional Bodies,** many looked to other professions in making comparisons and suggestions regarding how CPD was viewed, acknowledged or accredited. Some felt being part of a professional body brings with it an expectation of professional development, while others comparatively noted that other teaching and learning professionals (such as those in primary and secondary education) required professional accreditation in order to fill a teaching and learning role. As a result, some participants spoke about the potential for the creation of a professional body for higher education lecturers or teachers. It was suggested that flexible portfolio approach to measuring or assessing CPD that has been completed could lead towards a professional award in recognition of expertise in teaching in learning and that this might be effective in supporting professional recognition, such as a fellowship for example.

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Appendices:

Appendix A - Survey analysis:

The first phase of the research disseminated a survey to LDOs in each of the chosen sample institutions asking them to complete fourteen questions related to the organisation and delivery of unaccredited CPD training within their institution. This section of the results aims to outline the results of questions one to twelve. The latter two questions (13 & 14) requested that the LDOs furnish information related to their provision of unaccredited CPD and will be addressed in another section of this results section. This first section of results will provide an outline of the results from each question in the survey and discuss them with reference to the research questions of the research study.

Eight of the questions presented in the survey asked enquired whether certain features or practices associated with the provision of CPD training were present in the LDOs particular institution. As such, the participants were able to provide yes/no answers indicated the presence or absence of these features. Figure 1. Present below provides a visual representation of the frequencies of yes and no responses across the sample of institutions for each question. The subject of the question is represented in the left hand column of the figure.
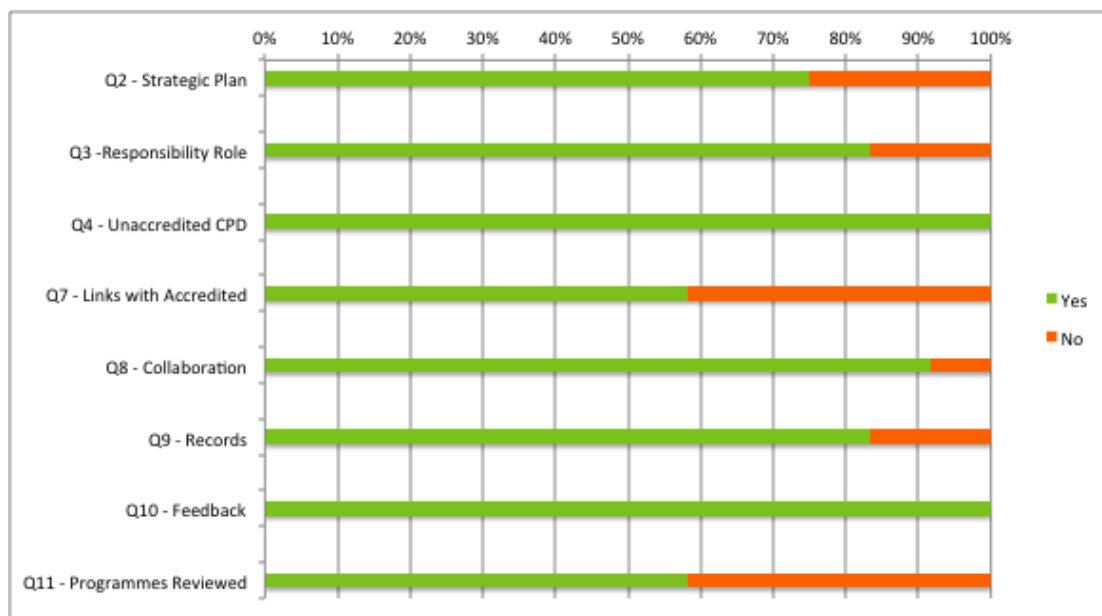

Figure 19. Frequencies of Yes/No responses per survey question across sample.

Table 1. Outlines the same data in a frequency table format. .

Total	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11
Yes	9	10	12	7	11	10	12	8
No	3	2	0	5	1	2	0	4

The following will discuss the results for each question individually. Each section addresses the results for a particular question and discusses these results with reference to research questions being addressed through this research.

Q1 - Teaching Staff

Four institutions out of twelve provided us with figures relating to the number of teaching staff that they possess. As there was such a low return rate on this element of the survey we have are unable to draw/analyse any meaningful results which may have shown possible correlations between the provision of unaccredited CPD and the size of the teaching staff of any given third level institution.

Q2 - Strategic Plan

Of those who responded to the survey a total of nine institutions have identified that they have specific plans in place for the provision of CPD for teaching and learning professionals in their institution. Of these three Universities recognise the need for teaching and learning professionals to regularly up-skill in new technologies and pedagogies so that the expectations and needs of their learners can be met. The focus in this instance relies on providing opportunities for their staff to engage in continued professional development programmes in these areas but also in research and academics.

Six institutes of technology identified that they possess a strategic plan. Of these, three identify a combination of "*Teaching/Learning/Assessment Strategies"* which exist within their institutions for the purposes of CPD provision. The other institution identified it as a specific project within a key section of their institutions strategic plan. Their focus is largely similar to that of the Universities in that they are up-skilling their staff through provision of CPD, in some cases offering both unaccredited and accredited professional development opportunities. One institution has a specific strategic plan document in place for staff training and development.

Two of the institutions that responded that they don't have a strategic plan in place for CPD identified that within their institutions overall strategic plans, the need for teaching professional's to be provided with opportunities to develop professionally in the area of teaching and learning is recognised albeit not specifically. One of these institutions also highlighted their Teaching/Learning/Assessment Strategy in that it provides for the provision of CPD.

What is clear throughout the majority of the sample is that, despite variance between what each institution self-identified as a strategic plan for CPD, there was an acknowledged need for CPD to be provided. However, the specifics by which this identified provision of CPD could be achieved are not identified or explored. Rather CPD is identified as being part of a process by which a larger goal can be achieved (for example increasing student engagement, or improving teaching and learning practices within the institution). The overwhelming focus was therefore on what type of CPD was provided rather than on how CPD will be provided for. This point will be explored in greater detail in the section of the results reporting for the qualitative interviews and focus groups.

Q3 – Responsibility for Co-Ordination and Provision of CPD

The majority of institutions identified that there is either an individual or group that has responsibility for the co-ordination and provision of CPD. None of these individuals or groups have

overall responsibility for CPD provision across the entire organisation. Specifically, there were four areas identified where responsibility for delivering unaccredited CPD were reported to lie. These included Human Resources; specific committees/centres/individuals; individual schools; and finally independent departments which would include for example Libraries and IT Divisions.

In relation to the provision of teaching and learning unaccredited CPD, the nine institutions have teaching/learning/assessment groups in the form of committees/centres/units. Some of these have overall responsibility for that specific type of CPD while others provide direction to someone in a specific role with responsibility for the delivery of CPD.

Two institutions had this responsibility rest with individuals in specific senior posts.

Q4 - Offer of unaccredited CPD to T&L Professionals

All institutions have said that they offer unaccredited CPD to teaching and learning staff within their institution.
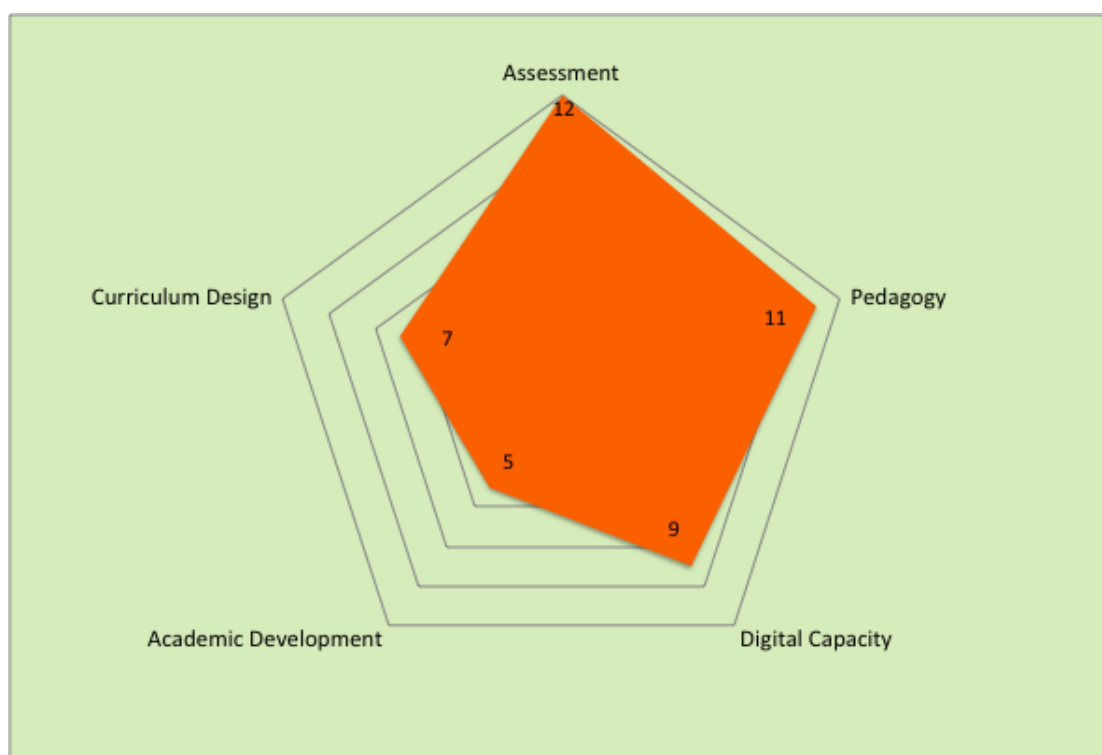
Q5 - Areas Targeted

Figure 2. The identified target areas of unaccredited CPD in Teaching and Learning and the number of institutions targeting each particular area with their provision

A variety of areas were identified as target areas for unaccredited teaching and learning CPD. These broadly speaking fell into five categories as highlighted in Figure 2. above. The area of assessment included elements of group assessment, feedback and assessment for learning. Pedagogy included areas such as active, problem based and blended learning. Digital capacity related to any areas that focused on the development of staff skills in relation to their own digital capacity for the purposes of utilising it and different technologies within their classrooms. Academic development covered areas

surrounding academic writing, supervision and plagiarism. Curriculum design focused on programme and module design, review and development.

The frequencies by which these appeared in responses are included in the figure above. The significant majority of institutions are targeting the areas of assessment and pedagogy. There is also a significant amount of institutions targeting their digital capacity of their staff, including but not limited to technology enhanced learning.

While these were identified as the broad themes, the specific topics in each theme become more apparent in question 13. Interestingly while institutions did not identify some specific areas that they target in this question, they have in fact been captured in question 13 in terms of areas they have actually provided for.

Q6 - CPD Providers and Why

All institutions have identified that they utilise internal staff for the provision of CPD. All but one have identified that they will use external individuals also while four institutions identified external providers such as LIN, EDIN and the National Forum.

Seven institutions did not explain why these were chosen, however most institutions most commonly described the providers as "experts" (n=9). Of those that did the most common responses related to "reputation" (n=3), "qualifications" (n=2) and "expertise" (n=3).

Q7 - Links between unaccredited and accredited

A slight majority of institutions identified that unaccredited CPD does link in with accredited CPD or other forms of training. Of those that did not, one institution highlighted that they do plan to do this in line with the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education CPD framework consultation. Another simply identified that they do not currently run any accredited CPD programmes.

Of those that did identify links these were primarily based on the idea that individuals could undertake certain modules from accredited programmes without actually being part of the accredited programme. One institution identified that as part of their accredited programme in teaching and learning they are required to undertake an additional two workshops/seminars which would be identified as unaccredited CPD. Another identified that there is simply overlap in the topics that are discussed.

Q8 - Collaboration with other Institutions

One institution identified that they do not collaborate with other institutions. Collaboration between institutions primarily occurs within pre-defined groups, identified as LIN, EDIN, CUA, the shannon consortium and through the National Forum.

Other collaborations exist between individual national and international institutions for specific purposes such as visiting speakers and research discussions.

Q9 - Record Keeping

The majority of institutions (n=10) maintain a record of the up-take of unaccredited CPD. In most instances this appears to be a basic record of attendance/numbers present, in some cases

attendance at unaccredited CPD is recorded in individual's personal file. In one instance attendance at these programmes is also sent to HR. More information is available in section 4.6.1.

Q10 - Feedback Mechanisms

All institution have indicated that there are mechanisms by which participants may provide feedback on any unaccredited programme that they attend. It should be noted however, that a number of institutions indicated that this may not always occur or may often be at the discretion of the facilitator as to whether or not it will happen. One institution highlighted that specific evaluations do take place.

Some institutions highlighted that the feedback is then analysed for the purposes of assessing the benefit of the programme to their staff. It is also used for the purposes of improving the delivery of current CPD offerings, but also in identifying additional areas for which CPD may be required. More information is available in section 4.6.3.

Q11 - Programmes Reviewed

CPD programmes offered by institutions are formally reviewed by seven of the sample institutions. In these institutions the majority are done so on an annual basis, with one institution completeing formal review bi-annually. One institution did not provide the procedures by which these reviews happen or details regarding its frequence of occurrence.

In all cases the programmes are reviewed by the relevant teaching/learning/assessment committees/groups.

Q12 - Funding

Each institution utilises internal funding for the purposes of unaccredited CPD. A number of institutions offered specific information regarding this funding, noting that it comes from specific teaching/learning/assessment committees budgets (n=4), specific school/department budgets (n=3) and finally through centralized funding (n=4).

Five institutions stated that they also utilised external funding, four of which by applying to the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching & Learning in Higher Education. The other institution identified the use of the Shannon Consortium budget, to which all member institutions contribute.

It is worth noting that two institutions highlighted the Strategic Innovation Fund (SIF) as contributing to their funding in the past. Others highlighted that they previously were in receipt of other forms of grants and funding but no longer are. These included the Training of Trainers programme from the HEA and the National Academy for the Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning. Others were not specified. One institute highlighted that some programmes are income generating.

Learning & Development Officer Survey

1. Number of teaching staff:

2. Does your institution have a strategic plan in place with regards to CPD provision for teaching and learning professionals? Yes ❑   No ❑

   Please explain:

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

3. Is there an individual/group within your institution who has responsibility for the co-ordination and provision of CPD?   Yes ❑   No ❑

   Please explain:

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

4. Does your institution offer unaccredited CPD to teaching and learning professionals?

   Yes ❑   No ❑

5. What areas of unaccredited teaching and learning CPD are targeted in your institution?

   _____
   _____
   _____

6. Who are the providers of this CPD and why were they chosen?

   _____
   _____

_____
_____

7. Do any elements of the provision of unaccredited CPD link in with accredited CPD or other forms of training?   Yes ❑   No ❑

Please explain:

_____
_____
_____
_____

8. Does your institution collaborate with any other institution with regard CPD provision? Please explain:

_____
_____
_____
_____

9. Are records of the uptake of the unaccredited CPD maintained?

_____
_____
_____
_____

10. Are there any mechanisms in place by which participants can provide feedback on any unaccredited CPD they take partake in?   Yes ❑   No ❑

Please explain:

_____
_____
_____
_____

11. Are unaccredited CPD programs in your institution reviewed? If so, how often and by what means?

_____
_____
_____
_____

12. Where does funding for these programs come from?

_____
_____
_____
_____

13. Please detail/name all available unaccredited teaching and learning CPD programmes in your institution and list their learning outcomes: (you may wish to ask a representative from each of the following disciplines relevant to your own institution to gather this information for you – Education & Training; Arts & Humanities; Social science; Business and Law; Science, Maths and Computing; Engineering, Manufacturing & Construction; Health & Welfare; Others)

_____
_____
_____
_____

14. Are there any of the above disciplinary areas in your institution that engage in unaccredited CPD regularly, be it provision or taking part?　　Yes ❑　No ❑

Please explain:

_____
_____
_____
_____

Appendix C – Interview Schedule

Interview Schedule

Warm up Question	Prompts	Follow up questions
Could you describe the impact unaccredited continuous professional development (CPD) has on your role?	• What was your experience of the IRAP assessment? • How did you find responding to the improvisational directions? • Which part of the session do you enjoy the most?	• Can you elaborate on anything aspect of participating in these phases?
Introductory Question		
What role does unaccredited CPD training play in your institutions overall CPD strategy for staff?	• What are the main strategic goals of the plan? • What role does unaccredited CPD play in achieving them? •	• Why were these main points selected for the overall CPD strategic plan? • How do these main points related to the national strategy of the development of staff CPD?
Key Question 1		
How is unaccredited CPD implemented and delivered within your institution?	• Could you describe how responsibility for unaccredited CPD managed/ developed is managed within your institution? • What institutional collaborations are involved in the development and delivery of unaccredited CPD? • How do the contribute toward the overall institutional program? • What collaborations are there with other institutions or external bodies in relation to the development or delivery of unaccredited CPD? •	• How is participation in unaccredited CPD by teaching and learning monitored within your institution? • How are the different disciplinary groupings represented in participation in unaccredited CPD? • What differences can you see in the way different disciplinary groupings engage with unaccredited CPD? • Why do feel these differences exist?

Key Question 2		
What effect does your feel unaccredited CPD has on the practice or performance of staff within your Institution?	• How does your institution assess or review the impact of unaccredited CPD on staff practice/ performance? • How effective do you feel this reviewing process is?	• What aspects of performance is your institution targeting through its unaccredited CPD? • Why are these targets selected and how do they related to the overall function of your institution?
Key Question 3		
How do you feel the delivery and uptake of unaccredited CPD might be improved?	• What are the particular areas you feel could be improved? • Would you have any specific suggestion of how to improve these areas?	• How do you feel unaccredited CPD could be improved at a national level? • Can you identify any specific things that might improve delivery of unaccredited CPD at a national level? • How do you feel inter-institutional collaboration could improve unaccredited CPD delivery and design? Could you explain?
Ending Question		
Is there anything else you would like to share about your experiences regarding the development of implementation of unaccredited CPD?	•	•

Focus Group Schedule

Topic Area	Guiding Questions
Topic 1: Participation in delivery of unaccredited Continuous professional development training within work institution	What role does your disciplinary grouping play in the design and delivery of unaccredited CPD to teaching and learning professionals within your institution? How are you invovled in the development or delivery of unaccredited CPD? How has this role and/or relationship developed within your institution? How does your institutional grouping/ professional organization guide your participation? Is there a disciplinary plan or set of guidelines to guide your practice in this domain? How does your particular disciplinary grouping support your delivery of unaccredited CPD?
Topic 2: Selection and uptake of personal unaccredited CPD to support professional practice :	Why is engagement in CPD important for supporting the professional practice of teaching and learning professionals from your disciplinary groups? Can you give me examples to clarify why? What role does unaccredited CPD training play within overall CPD development ? What role does participation in unaccredited CPD play in supporting your own practice? What guidelines do your disciplinary groupings provide for participation in CPD? What role dos these guidelines play in your choice of participation in unaccredited CPD? How often should teaching and learning professionals from your disciplinary area

	engage in unaccredited CPD? Why would you say this? What skills does unaccredited CPD training in particular develop for teaching and learning professional from your disciplinary area?
Topic 3: Development of participation in unaccredited CPD?	How do you feel the delivery and uptake of unaccredited CPD might be improved by teaching and learning professionals within your disciplinary area? What are the particular areas you feel could be improved? Would you have any specific suggestion of how to improve these areas? How could your institution support these improvements? How could these improvements be supported at a national level? Can you identify any specific things that might improve delivery of unaccredited CPD at a national level? How do you feel inter-institutional collaboration could improve unaccredited CPD delivery and design? Could you explain?