

# Welcome to the April 2021 *in partnership*

In this month's edition of In Partnership we announce our member benefit theme for April and May on transforming organisations: from student to board. We also focus on the experiences of our Senior Fellows, the Race Equality Charter review and upcoming member benefits and events.

To stay up to date with the latest work at Advance HE and to share, connect and collaborate with colleagues from around the world, visit [Advance HE Connect](#). Some users may find that email notifications from Advance HE Connect go to spam folders. You can resolve this by adding Advance HE Connect to your safe senders list, or by notifying your university IT department.

*As always we welcome your feedback. Please contact your Head of Membership with any ideas or content you would like featured.*



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# Connect Benefit Series



## Connect Benefit Series March: Sustainability for everyone: here and now

Our March Connect Benefit Series theme “Sustainability for everyone: here and now” focused on the premise (and need) that sustainability is for everyone, both in higher education (HE) and beyond. We addressed key challenges including Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and climate change, and consider how sustainability can be prioritised.

Outputs for this month included a live event “**Leading Sustainability in Higher Education: Leading for a Lost Cause?**” which provided a rare opportunity to consider sustainability in conjunction with leadership in HE. The event, introduced by Doug Parkin (Advance HE) and chaired by Patrick Baughan (Advance HE), posed challenging questions to our expert panel:

- + Professor Eunice Simmons - Vice-Chancellor, University of Chester
- + Meg Baker - Director of Education, Students Organising for Sustainability (SOS-UK)
- + Professor Jim Longhurst - Assistant Vice Chancellor, Environment and Sustainability, University of the West of England
- + Professor Simon Kemp - Deputy Head (Education), School of Geography and Environmental Science, University of Southampton
- + Professor Nazira Karodia - Pro Vice Chancellor Regional Engagement, University of Wolverhampton



Other outputs for this month included the blog collection **Voices of Sustainability** and a publication addressing the under-researched area of sustainability leadership.



## Connect Benefit Series April– Transforming organisations: from student to board

For April and May, our Connect Benefit Series theme ‘Transforming Organisations: from student to board’ will be looking at transforming organisations from the perspective of different stakeholder groups, and consider how our HEI’s can bring about authentic strategic and cultural change.

Many institutions are telling us that they need to review, stress test or simply start again with their strategic aims in the light of Covid-19’s disruption. Although on the whole their purpose is still intact, how the strategy is delivered might now need to look and feel very different. Engaging all stakeholders in visioning and owning the transformation required, aligning this with values, aids the holistic realisation of change and delivery of the strategy.

Outputs for this month will include a series of blogs, a visioning activity, a virtual sandpit event, a Tweet Chat on 28 April and a live webinar on 12 May 9:00 BST.

### March outputs

Find out more and access all of the outputs

[Access here](#)

 [Find out more](#)

# Member Benefits and Opportunities



## Student Partnerships in Assessment

As the higher education sector continues to navigate through the equality impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on teaching and learning, our [Student Partnerships in Assessment programme](#) offers members an opportunity to participate in synchronous and asynchronous online events offering contemporary and diverse thought leadership about embedding the student voice in the design of assessment strategies.

This member benefit is targeted at senior colleagues with responsibility for programmes leadership for 2021-22 academic year and senior student representatives in an advocate role within institutions, with three places available per institution, to take part in a series of synchronous and asynchronous online events. If you haven't yet confirmed your institution's places, please speak to your Head of Membership.

The outcomes of these discussions will facilitate a series of outputs, accessible to all colleagues at Advance HE member institutions.

Find out more about the programme format and outputs in our [new blog by Dr Eilis Flanagan](#).

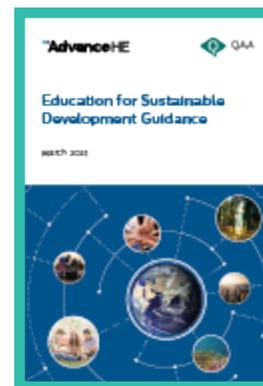
[Find out more](#)

## Education for Sustainable Development

On 29 March, in partnership with QAA we launched the new guidance on Education for Sustainable Development in higher education. The revised Education for Sustainable Development guidance (ESDG) is intended to help higher education institutions incorporate Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) within their curricula.

The guidance comes at a time of increased urgency to tackle the climate crisis and its interconnected development needs. As the UK prepares to host the COP26 UN Climate Conference later this year in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, the higher education sector has a key role in helping address sustainable development issues.

QAA and Advance HE brought together a group of experts representing academic, business and student communities, with the aim of supporting all students to acquire the skills necessary to develop values and take actions to transition society towards a sustainable future. The guidance gives advice and support on curriculum design, as well as teaching, learning and assessment approaches.



[Access the guidance](#)

## Advance HE Member Survey

At Advance HE we are committed to providing our members with a wide range of benefits that have impact and add value in addressing your key strategic and practice level challenges. It is essential that these benefits facilitate enhancement, development and innovation across the breadth of institutional teams in support of your primary goals.

In 2020-21 as the sector faces a global pandemic which is having a universally recognised impact on higher education and society generally, we have refocused our member benefits to support members in designing sustainable and flexible educational programmes, strengthening leadership and governance capacity and mitigating the impact on equalities of Covid-19. We are seeking feedback on the member benefits and services you have engaged with during the year, as well as your views on what your strategic priorities are over the next 12 to 18 months.

The survey is open until 17:00 BST on 19 April 2021. Please do take the 15 minutes it should take to provide your views. Your feedback is hugely important to us.

[Take the survey](#)

# Teaching and Learning

## Senior Fellow Month - March 2021

March 2021 was our Senior Fellow Month at Advance HE and in celebration we are proud to share our Senior Fellows' stories of success and experience in higher education.



### My Senior Fellowship journey

Faiza Qureshi reflects on her Senior Fellowship and the impact that has on enhancing quality of learning and teaching



### Applying for Senior Fellowship when not an academic

Tom Lowe from the University of Winchester shares his top tips for student engagement and employability professionals when applying for Senior Fellowship.



### My journey to Senior Fellow and some tips to help you along the way

Laura Stinson of Nottingham Trent University shares her journey through the Senior Fellowship application process and her top tips for prospective applicants.



### Three key tips to get started on the path to achieving Senior Fellowship

Gordon Leonard, TNE Partnership Manager, University of Stirling, shares his approach to a successful Senior Fellowship application.

[Read more](#)

[Read more](#)

[Read more](#)

[Read more](#)

## Mentoring “Coffee Morning” for Fellows

Mentoring is a key mechanism used to support staff development in higher education, and is used extensively as part of the process of developing applications for Fellowship. This session is aimed at Fellows in Advance HE member institutions to share practice around mentoring approaches globally, with a focus on mentoring staff both for Fellowship and more generally.

The session will be led by Dr Julie Baldry-Currens PFHEA, an independent higher education consultant and Advance HE accreditor with experience of mentoring staff in higher education providers across the world. Dr Julie will be joined by a global panel who will share their experience, and a key focus of the session is sharing practice amongst participants.

The session will be run live and repeated twice so participants can choose from one of the following options:

+ 27 April 2021: 15:00 GMT

+ 5 May 2021: 08:15 GMT

We look forward to you joining this session and celebrating global mentoring practice.

## Teaching and Learning continued

### Why work towards Principal Fellowship during these intense Covid times?

Dr Claire Gordon, Director, Eden Centre for Education Enhancement, London School of Economics and Political Science reflects on her journey to Principal Fellowship, highlighting the political nature of academic development work and the importance of seeing education change as a collective endeavour.

Last summer after several years of reflection and procrastination, I finally made the commitment to work in a focused way towards the submission of my Principal Fellowship application. It was arguably a strange decision. As the director of an education development centre at a traditional face-to-face campus university combining both academic development and digital education teams, last year has been beyond intense and demanding. We have worked long hours to enable the education of our students near and far and to support our colleagues in building their confidence and expertise in mixed modes of teaching and learning (face-to-face, hyflex and online) in the face of the Covid-19 pandemic. In the process we have moved mountains.

And yet, in retrospect, this was precisely the right time. It was an opportunity to reclaim some space for myself, to create an oasis for reflection on my professional journey as an educator and to step back from the reactive chalkface of academic development work during the pandemic. It inevitably meant working early morning, weekends and getting up early while I was on leave with my family.

Lots of my writing and reflection did not get to the final application but over the weeks of writing, rewriting, cutting and responding to the constructive critique of mentors, I came to see that the process was as important as the outcome. I saw new connections, common threads and values stretching across my career, a professional and

personal learning journey spanning several disciplines, countries and roles:

- + a passionate commitment to education with a focus on empowering students and enabling the development of people
- + receptivity, openness to the other/others and inclusion
- + an interest in power and the complexities in the way it works in countries, in institutions, in relationships, in people.

“ It is these values that led me to academic development work where I have found my professional home and identity and it is this journey that I needed to reflect on in order to be able to effectively evidence my strategic impact on student learning, organisational policy and approaches to academic practice in recent years for my Principal Fellowship application.”

My background as a political scientist has influenced my thinking about the nature of academic development work in higher education, about the complexities of motivating engagement in education work and navigating the complexities of effecting educational change in research intensive universities – an interest which led to a productive research collaboration with Dilly Fung on an Advance HE study on rewarding educators and education leaders. I have also been inspired by the work of Stephen Rowland who highlights the deeply political nature of academic development work, one that demands courage in the face of pressures to conform both within and beyond the university'. (2006, 72) I reflected on this in a blog posting celebrating the year's anniversary of our LSE HE Blog in May 2020 which, among other things, considered the liminal spaces in which we operate between overlapping academic and professional worlds. These political and

politicised dimensions of our work have also been acutely apparent in the recent pandemic as we have worked and struggled to enable our students to study, learn and grow and as universities have had to make difficult decisions in the face of huge uncertainty and constant policy shifts.

It was deeply frustrating at times to be pushed to demonstrate 'my' particular impact in the stories I was trying to tell when education and educational change are inherently collective endeavours. At the same time, it highlighted to me yet again the nuance and complexities of education work. In the end, I evidently managed to sufficiently pinpoint the impact I have had.

Working on my Principal Fellowship application also enabled me to remember, acknowledge and thank the many wonderful people who have joined me on this journey, colleagues who have mentored me, who I have worked with and learnt from along the way as well as the many inspiring students who get in touch now and again to tell me the stories of their lives.

Working on Principal Fellowship has its frustrations and definitely took more years than I expected. However, after an incredibly demanding year, I am really proud that I was able to finally eke out the time to do this and that, alongside the important pandemic response work, I was able to do something for myself. I strongly recommend others – if they can – to try to find this time for themselves as well.

Are you thinking of applying for Senior or Principal Fellowship? Writing Retreats offer 1:1 peer coaching and expert analysis, the space and time to process and craft your narrative for your submission.

[Find out more](#)

## Teaching and Learning continued

### Becoming a Teacher Educator: Guidelines for academic induction

Professor Pete Boyd, Professor Jean Murray and Dr Liz White introduce the recently published edition of the guidelines.

Who are teacher educators? What are their professional and academic backgrounds? And how can this occupational group best develop their skills and understanding as both university academics and practitioners?

These, and many other questions, are discussed in the 3rd edition of *Becoming a Teacher Educator: Guidelines for academic induction*, an open access resource published 25 March 2021. The resource provides guidance to support university-based teacher educators in the early years of appointment to their new roles. It is designed to help academics 'self-manage' all aspects of induction and the start of their career-long professional learning.

The occupational group of teacher educators is often defined as all who contribute formally to the learning and development of teachers, whether through initial or continuing teacher education programmes. This work is crucial for maintaining – and improving – the high quality of the teaching workforce; in turn, that has a significant impact upon the quality of teaching and learning in schools. Good quality academic induction and high-quality professional learning are therefore vital for teacher educators. The guidelines directly address the learning and development of university-based teacher educators, although they also have relevance for other teacher educators working in schools or colleges and for those senior staff creating and implementing professional learning programmes.

Teacher educators usually come into academia after sustained careers as teachers in schools. This practical experience of teaching is often highly valued in university-

based teacher education, as are the experiences of educational consultancy or school leadership which these 'first' careers may have provided. It is, however, rare for teacher educators to enter the university with completed doctorates or sustained experience of research.

Teacher educators are employed by universities on different types of contracts, sometimes including short-term, casual or teaching-only roles. This alone means that there are diverse roles, work patterns and expectations for teacher educators, often within the same teacher education department in any given university. Roles may include some combination of the following: teaching and student support (eg, mentoring or coaching work); assessing student teachers' 'fitness to teach'; advanced scholarship and research activity; academic administration (eg, contributing to module or programme leadership); and liaison with schools, including brokering partnerships or education consultancies.

Research shows that newly appointed teacher educators bring valuable expertise from their 'first' careers in schools to their 'second' in higher education, but they can also face considerable challenges in terms of accessing effective professional learning in universities. To outsiders, the move from school teacher to university-based teacher educator may look like a simple transition from one work location to another and from teaching children to teaching adults, but research clearly indicates that the change is significant and, if unsupported by effective induction provision, may result in professional stress and anxiety. The old induction approach of 'throwing in at the deep end' and expecting the novice to thrive is clearly misguided. And admittedly, many universities are now improving the way that they support the induction of all newly appointed academics, often requiring, for example, completion of a postgraduate qualification for teaching in higher education. For teacher educators, however, there is still considerable space for improvement.

The areas of challenge for new teacher educators during their early professional learning can be summarised as follows:

- + developing a pedagogy for teacher education, particularly learning how to teach adults who are intending or serving school teachers
- + becoming aware of student teachers' learning and progression patterns
- + building knowledge of the curricula for pre- and in-service teacher education programmes, and moving into active curriculum developer roles
- + understanding the 'gate keeper' roles which teacher educators have as 'guardians' of the teaching profession and the assessment procedures within these roles
- + developing the advanced scholarship which necessarily informs and underpins all aspects of teacher education programmes
- + increasing knowledge and understanding of the cultural and professional norms and expectations of the higher education contexts in which they now work
- + moving, over time, as required, to becoming active producers of research, through doctoral study or team work with more experienced colleagues
- + if required, generating income and research impact through consultancy work with schools.

The 'Becoming a Teacher Educator' guidelines are designed to help new teacher educators to address all these challenges.

 [Access the publication](#)

# Leadership and Development

## New network for women in senior leadership roles

A new network for women in senior leadership roles in higher education had its inaugural meeting on International Women's Day (8 March 2021), the global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural, and political achievements of women. In 2021, the theme was #ChooseToChallenge by calling out gender bias and inequality, seeking out and celebrating women's achievements and helping to create an inclusive world.

Advance HE Chief Executive Alison Johns chaired the network with Advance HE Board member Professor Helen Higson as co-Chair. Shirley Malcom, senior advisor and director of SEA Change at the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) was the first guest speaker in conversation with Alison to discuss what #ChooseToChallenge meant to her personally and her work around advancing equality in US higher education.

In her more than 40-year tenure at the AAAS, Shirley has worked to improve the quality and increase access to education and careers in STEM as well as to enhance public science literacy. She is a former member of the National Science Board, the policymaking body of the U.S. National Science Foundation, and served on President Clinton's Committee of Advisors on Science and Technology.

Shirley Malcom said:

“ I am honoured to have been invited to participate in this important conversation. The theme #ChooseToChallenge not only resonates in the UK, but also in the US.

As women, many of us have been socialised to be more laid back and accepting, especially in fields dominated by men. It is very difficult to be 'the only' or 'the first', or 'among the few.' When we find ourselves in these roles we have to decide how we will engage moving forward. This has especially been my case as a woman of color in the sciences.”



Tracy Bell-Reeves, Director of Programmes and Events at Advance HE, said:

“ This is a unique forum for women working in senior roles within higher education with a shared interest in advancing gender equality, supporting women and exploring relevant leadership issues with their peers.

We are delighted to welcome Shirley to our inaugural meeting and look forward to hearing about her wealth of experience in US HE.

The aim of our new network is to offer access to a mutually supportive peer community, providing an opportunity to explore leadership issues relevant to women in higher education. Members of the group will be encouraged to help shape the network going forward by sharing what is important to them to support women in HE leadership roles.”

This was a great way to launch our network and following the conversation with Shirley, we welcomed hearing from you about how you would like to help shape this network going forward.

We hope that the network offers access to a mutually supportive peer community, will offer opportunity to explore issues relevant to women in higher education and get involved as advocates and champions for others.

Catch up on Shirley's session below.



Advance HE's Senior Women's Leadership Network will take place quarterly.

[Find out more](#)

## Leadership and Development continued

### From resilience to growth – can the pandemic transform the HE sector for the better?

Ahead of the next Strategic Leadership Programme (SLP), Lisa Sofianos, Advance HE Senior Associate and SLP co-facilitator, looks for signs of ‘Post Traumatic Growth’ in the HE sector as a foundation to ‘build back better’.

I was talking to my son about Australian gum trees and how their survival depends upon the cycle of devastating bush fires that sweep large swathes of the country every year. The tough seed pods of the tree can only germinate in the heat of a fire. The ash of the burned forest nourishes the shoots and the space cleared by the devastation allows the young seedlings essential access to sunlight.

It doesn't take a trained psychologist to understand why that image of something new born out of catastrophe has stayed with me in the current circumstances and it has propelled my thinking into the territory of Post Traumatic Growth (Tedeschi and Calhoun). This is the idea that alongside the loss and horror of trauma, is a potential for lasting positive transformation. This potential doesn't lie in the traumatic event itself, but in the psychological shifts that we make as we struggle to accommodate the new reality.

It's important to accept that we have all experienced some level of trauma during the pandemic. Some of us have faced huge challenges. Even if we consider that we have been relatively lucky, we have had to face the frightening unknown without any of our usual support and comforts. We are all engaged in exhausting levels of emotional labour as we struggle to stay motivated and professional in our work, just as we feel overwhelmed and fearful. Despite this,

the sector has demonstrated immense levels of resilience and if we understand resilience as the ability to carry on in the face of difficulty then this in itself is a great accomplishment. But what if there is the chance for something longer-lasting and transformational about how we have managed to endure, that we need to articulate and build into the post-Covid HE sector?

Working online and at home has allowed us a unique opportunity to understand the realities of people's lives as they've struggled for space in a house share, or valiantly tried to home-school and work full-time, or balanced being a carer and a university employee.

We've show compassion to people who were relative strangers in the past. We've seen comfort win over sharp suits, confronted lockdown haircuts with humour, leant on each other for support and shared tribulations. We've sacrificed freedoms to help others. Traditional notions of professionalism and gravitas have been deeply questioned.

“ The reality is that we will be dealing with unwinding trauma for a significant time in workplaces and perhaps the answers to how we will do so lie in what we have learned in the past year.”

The real challenge for senior leaders is not just how to embody the humane and empathetic leadership that is required now, but to create systems and cultures that reflect this. How do we make kinder institutions that leverage the learning that we have made during the pandemic and allow weary people to function and thrive? And how do we make sure that this unique opportunity does not pass us by?

Perhaps a starting point is to consider how you might answer these questions about your institution:

- + How have our priorities changed?
- + What do we value now?
- + How have our relationships changed?
- + How do we want to operate now?

If you are looking for a place to reflect on these questions and, more importantly, to act upon them in your institution, then you might consider the Advance HE Strategic Leadership Programme (SLP), where dynamics such as these are explored, challenged and rendered actionable.

SLP is an open programme for HE leaders looking to enact strategic projects in their institution, across the sector or beyond. If the pandemic has given you a resolve for change then we look forward to meeting you. Applications close on 19 April 2021.

[Find out more](#)

# Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

## Advance HE welcomes the Race Equality Charter Review Phase 2 report

Advance HE welcomes the report from Douglas Oloyede consultants as part of the planned review of the Race Equality Charter (REC), which adds substantially to the evidence base informing the future development of the Charter.

Regular reviews of the REC have been enshrined in its aims since the Charter was launched in 2015. It is a framework for institutions to self-reflect on institutional and cultural barriers for fair opportunity for Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) staff and students. The 2020-21 review provides the opportunity to ensure the Charter remains as effective as possible for the higher education and research community.

For this phase of the review, Douglas Oloyede researchers explored the experiences of award-holders, applicants, and REC signatories. The findings from the interviews and survey work show:

- + consensus that the Charter's self-assessment approach provides a structure and robust evidence base to guide an institution's race equality work
- + recognition by participants that the data requirements, though extensive, are needed for enabling identification of the racial inequalities to be addressed
- + the REC Survey – a mandatory part of a REC application – was found to be useful by the majority of respondents, especially in relation to enabling identification of actions and interventions for their action plan.

As a relatively 'young' Charter it is too early to fully measure its impact, though the report found that among the institutions who have held a REC award since 2015-16, the majority reported increases in the proportions of academic, professional and support staff and undergraduate students identifying as BAME, with the most dramatic changes seen to reduction of the degree awarding gap between white and BAME students for 'good degrees' (1st/2:1s). There were also positive changes to overall representation of BAME students among postgraduate students. Furthermore, among institutions who have held REC awards for a shorter time, and REC members who do not yet have an award, there was evidence of progress being made on addressing racial inequalities.

The Phase 2 report, coupled with the previous independent work undertaken by Dr Nicola Rollock in Phase 1, provides Advance HE valuable understanding of what aspects of the Charter should be explored and developed further to ensure REC members are best supported in their race equality efforts. These include how best Advance HE:

- + supports member institutions to foster a greater understanding of race and racism, and how structural inequalities manifest in higher education
- + provides greater support and additional resources for institutions considering joining the Charter
- + offers more support to members prior to their submission of an award application, including support for effective action planning
- + revises and enhances the processes of the Charter to streamline and facilitate members' experiences.

 [Access the report](#)

Kathryn Harrison-Graves, Advance HE Director for Membership and Accreditation, said:

“A great strength of the REC is that it is tailored for and by the higher education sector, and the insight gained from colleagues' experiences with the Charter will be invaluable to shaping its future.

We are keen to ensure that the sector's voice remains at the heart of REC's future development, and are happy to announce the creation of a new REC Governance Committee, to inform and oversee the ongoing and future development of the Charter.

It's never been more important to ensure the sector is effectively supported to address racial inequalities, as evidenced by the depressing data in the recent HESA staff statistics report. Though it is encouraging this year to see a renewed energy, determination and commitment in the sector to drive out racism and discrimination, galvanised by a world-wide condemnation of racial injustice. The REC is an excellent framework to help that work; but it is just the beginning, it's using it and the action that follows that really matters.”

 [Apply to join the REC Governance Committee](#)

Advance HE recently reiterated its **unwavering commitment** to support all members in their work to remove barriers to success, drive out inequalities and to tackle racism so that all their students and staff can thrive and realise their potential and ambitions.

**Our own evidence** shows that significant racial inequalities amongst students and staff persist in our sector, from the awarding gap and continuation rates for students to the lower proportions of both UK and non-UK BAME staff on open-ended/permanent contracts, in senior management positions, and on higher salary bands.

## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion continued

### Advance HE is proud to support International Women’s Day

Alison Johns, Advance HE Chief Executive, says, “We are proud to join the worldwide support for International Women’s Day (IWD) and its theme for 2021 #ChooseToChallenge.

“It is both inspiring and humbling to look back over the timeline of 110 years of IWD and to read the extraordinary stories of women who have campaigned for what should be a given right for women everywhere – equal status and fair representation.

“We all know that in varying degrees around the world women are very far from enjoying equality. We owe it to the legacy of the campaigners before us, to ourselves and to the generations who will follow us, to sustain the campaign, to never give up or lose impetus.

“In our area, higher education, we have a perfect platform for advancing progress in challenging inequality; for it is through education that real and lasting change can be achieved. For Advance HE this means using our global networks to champion one of our three strategic goals, which is to ‘address systemic inequalities for staff and students’ and our specific commitment to ‘drive progress in equality, diversity and inclusion’.

“Our promise on International Women’s Day is that we will deliver on this strategy and commitment. We will #ChooseToChallenge.”



Find out more about Advance HE’s work including the [Athena Swan Charter](#), encouraging and recognising commitment to advancing gender equality; our other work to promote [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion](#); and specific [development programmes](#) designed to encourage and recognise commitment to advancing gender equality in higher education.

### “Significant step forward” for gender equality as five institutions in Ireland awarded Athena SWAN Bronze

**Five institutes of technology and 10 departments have been recognised for measures to improve gender equality in higher education in the latest round of Athena SWAN awards, announced in March 2021.**

The institutes of technology in Athlone, Dundalk, Galway-Mayo, Letterkenny and Sligo each receive a Bronze award, which recognises that the institutions have identified their key gender equality challenges and opportunities and have action plans to drive progress.

Awards made to Athlone IT, Dundalk IT, Galway-Mayo IT, Letterkenny IT, and IT Sligo bring the total number of institutions in Ireland with Athena SWAN Bronze to 19. Ten university departments also receive Bronze in this assessment round, meaning a total of 52 departments now hold awards across Ireland’s higher education sector.

Simon Harris, TD, Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, said:

“My department is working to ensure gender equality across Higher and Further Education. I very much welcome today’s announcement of the 15 new Athena SWAN awards. These awards represent a significant step forward for gender equality in our higher education institutions. We are making progress on this issue, and these awards recognise the commitment that our institutions are making to improving gender equality for those working in higher education.”

Dr Victoria Brownlee, Head of Athena SWAN Ireland, said:

“Progress on gender equality right across higher education is essential for retaining talent and ensuring our institutions at all levels are representative of society.

These are the first entry-level awards to recognise institutions and departments taking action to address gender inequalities in career development experienced by professional, managerial and support staff as well as by academic staff. It’s very encouraging to see so many applicants engage in improvements to support the spectrum of staff roles in the sector.”

[Find out more](#)

## Equality, Diversity and Inclusion continued

### Decolonising Identity – new podcast series tackling structural race inequality in HE

As part of the Advance HE work on tackling structural race inequality in higher education we have produced a series of podcasts in conversation with a range of exceptional guest speakers. The series looks at how the identity of Black, Asian and Minority staff and students impacts and influences their experience of higher education. All three episodes are available to listen to now.

Sukhi Kainth, Senior Adviser at Advance HE, introduces a new series of podcasts exploring identity, ‘race’, and higher education:

“I’ve spent years supporting institutional change, whether with institutional leaders or practitioners, student unions, government and funders, and across different national and legal jurisdictions. I’ve helped people to consider and explore equity and inclusion in relation to a range of identities: gender, trans identity or history, religion, and ethnicity. No surprise then perhaps, that I’ve been on a personal exploration of identity.

This series of podcasts will ask guests and listeners to explore how free we are within our own sense of our personal identity, and what can be the impact when this sense of self does not align with an identity often prescribed to us through categorisation, stereotypes and perception.

We invite you to listen, learn and unlearn, and hope these conversations will be a useful additional free resource to our members to support your efforts to tackle structural race inequality.”

#### ‘What’s in a name’?

In the first podcast in the series, Sukhi Kainth, Senior Advisor, Advance HE is joined by Khadija Mohammed (Advance HE Senior Fellow and Senior Lecturer in the School of Education and Social Science at the University of West Scotland), Professor Binna Kandola OBE, (Business Psychologist, Senior Partner and co-founder Pearn Kandola) and Mia Liyanage (decolonisation advocate and scholar of queer history), who share their views on the impact of categorisation and labelling.



#### ‘Today world I will play the part of...’

In the second podcast in this series, Sukhi Kainth, Senior Advisor, Advance HE is joined by Dr Jason Arday, Associate Professor in Sociology at the Department of Sociology and the Deputy Executive Dean for People and Culture in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Health, Durham University and Gary Loke, Director of Knowledge, Innovation and Delivery, Advance HE who share their views on the different masks worn by people of colour when navigating predominantly white spaces within higher education.



#### ‘Can I get my ally badge now?’

In the third and final episode in this podcast series, Sukhi Kainth, Senior Advisor, Advance HE is joined by Dr Gurnam Singh, Associate Professor of Equity of Attainment at Coventry University and Robiu Salisu, Student Inclusion Officer at Bristol University, who share their views on the role of allyship in tackling structural racism and what being an anti-racist advocate looks and feels like.



# Governance

## Advance HE invites applications to join its Board of Directors

Advance HE is looking to appoint a number of new members to its Board of Directors. The appointments come at a time when Advance HE is about to launch its new strategy ‘to help higher education be the best it can be’.

Stephen Marston, recently appointed Chair of the Board, and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Gloucestershire, said:

“This is a really exciting time to be joining Advance HE’s Board. The successful merger and the emergence of a robust single organisation with a coherent remit means that Advance HE is now well placed to push forward in developing our services, working in partnership with our members to support them in meeting their professional and organisational goals.

We have been working very closely with the Executive as they have developed their new strategy. Our role to ‘guide, challenge and advise’ will be a key part in the successful delivery of these ambitious plans, particularly in listening to members and ensuring that Advance HE provides value through membership in a continuously changing policy landscape.

We will be developing our key services and frameworks, in partnership with the sector, for staff professional development, leadership and governance, and promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion – all critical to enabling the higher education sector to thrive in challenging and turbulent times. In short, it will be a busy, yet rewarding, role for new Board members.



Clearly it’s vital that a Board’s advice and guidance reflects diverse experiences and opinions. We welcome applicants from all backgrounds and communities. I particularly encourage applications from minority ethnic backgrounds, and specifically those from Black backgrounds, who are currently under-represented on the Board.”

Among the professional skills and expertise Advance HE is looking for are financial (strategic finance or commercial experience), student or student union experience, or recent experience of operating in an international context. Appointments to the Board will be made for either two or three years in the first instance.

Advance HE is also seeking co-optees for its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and its Audit, Finance and Risk Committee.

[Find out more](#)

## HEPI / Advance HE webinar: How do we ensure equality in higher education in a pandemic?

21 April 2021

The third webinar in the series focuses on how we move towards greater equality in higher education and the impact of Covid-19. In recent years progress has been made towards equality in HE, but there are still significant improvements to be made.

Guest speakers to include:

- + Hillary Gyebi-Ababio, Vice President (Higher Education), National Union of Students
- + Khadija Mohammed, Senior Lecturer in Education, University of the West of Scotland
- + Professor Parveen Yaqoob, Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation), University of Reading

[Find out more](#)

Watch the recording of the previous webinar in the series focusing on what value for money looks like during a pandemic.



# International Spotlight

## ‘She Leads’ programme in Bahrain gives women in leadership roles platform to thrive

Advance HE recently delivered a remote ‘She Leads’ programme to female academics at the University of Bahrain which saw female leaders from across the Kingdom join together to take part in this innovative and forward thinking development initiative.

Bahrain has a good balance of women in the labour force of around 39%. In government sectors this increases to more than 50% and women assuming leadership positions in the official agencies of the state has reached 45%. The percentage in middle management positions is approximately 59%. These are very important achievements. But, women in Bahrain strive for more.

‘She Leads’ focuses on the key leadership skills that are vital for women to be able to thrive in higher education. Women have been taking on more leadership roles in higher education in Bahrain (and the wider academic world) but this comes with challenges as they seek to make their mark in roles traditionally the preserve of men.

The ‘She Leads’ programme aims to develop the skills needed to overcome these challenges including communication, strategic thinking and influencing others, whilst at the same time developing a sense of community, allyship and a shared understanding of what makes excellent female leadership.

The programme at the University of Bahrain was delivered by Jenny Garrett OBE, Advance HE Associate and award-winning Career Coach, Leadership Trainer and Author. She was awarded her OBE for services to Entrepreneurship and Women in Business.

Each workshop invited a speaker to reflect on their career journeys, their strengths and weaknesses, their values, possible challenges they have faced during those journeys, and their views on the future role of female leaders. The third session in particular included a panel discussion in which three prominent leaders representing the Supreme Council of Women, the Ministry of Education, and the University of Bahrain shared their experiences and views on power, work politics, and influence.

Advance HE’s experience in delivering women in leadership programmes, such as Aurora, led to the delivery of a series of interlinked webinars for up to 40 female leaders from across Bahrain including Heads of academic departments, administrative divisions and research institutes.

Outward-facing leadership is extremely important, but particularly for women looking to expand their influence, especially during these socially-distanced times when communication can be more difficult. With this in mind the programme encouraged the participants to look at the role female leadership can play in supporting gender equality, diversity and inclusion through positive working cultures, challenging redundant norms and removing barriers.



Dr Diana A Karim Aljahromi, Director of the Unit for Teaching Excellence and Leadership at the University of Bahrain, said:

“ Leaders have different stories and the programme served as a rich interactive milieu for these beautiful female leaders to share their stories and take the others through their career journey. I believe that the marriage between being driven by the love of learning and the passion for change, having values such as benevolence and the love of knowledge transfer, and having personality traits such as creativity and emotional intelligence can create exceptional female leaders.

We should always aspire others to lead. My leadership motto has always been: ‘Together we lead. Together we shine.’

Advance HE is committed to championing women’s equality and inclusion across the globe and this programme is another mark of that, the conclusion of which coincided with International Women’s Day, an international celebration of female achievement and success which aims this year to challenge gender bias and inequality.

We want to support your institution to rise to this challenge and create places of learning and employment that welcome diversity, nurture talent and create sustainable change. Find out more about how we can work with you. We want to support your institution to rise to this challenge and create places of learning and employment that welcome diversity, nurture talent and create sustainable change.

[Find out more](#)

## International Spotlight continued

### Setting the pace – rewarding and recognising teaching excellence

Jane Rarieya (SFHEA), Director, Quality, Teaching and Learning, reflects on the successful drive towards rewarding and recognising teaching excellence at the Aga Khan University.



#### Setting Off

In 2018, the Aga Khan University (AKU) became the first international University in the developing world to be accredited by Advance HE to award Fellowships at Associate Fellow (AF) and Fellow (F) levels through an in-house CPD Scheme called Teaching Enhancement Accredited Certification of the Higher Education Academy (TEACH). This was an enormous step in helping to entrench the nascent teaching culture at AKU that the Network of Quality, Teaching and Learning (QTL\_net) had been tasked to develop since 2014 when the unit was established.

This journey which commenced with small steps has now resulted in the establishment of an interdisciplinary Teachers' Academy (TA), the first of its kind in Pakistan and East Africa. The TA is a move to reward and recognise teaching excellence in higher education and is a home 'of and for faculty.' It will serve to continue enhancing the teaching culture at AKU. The AKU TA mission is to create an institutionalised professional teaching culture of excellence at the University through faculty mentorship activities as well as engagement in faculty development activities.

The foundational principles of the AKU TA are best captured by its logo which depicts a 'home' comprising a foundation, two pillars and a roof. These signify the four-fold purpose of the TA: (1) rewarding and recognising excellence in teaching; (2) developing a Community of Practice of teaching leaders; (3) enhancing Interdisciplinary Scholarship of Teaching and Learning; and (4) creating a pool of peer mentors to enhance teaching.

#### Becoming a Member

The TA members are an elite group of outstanding and talented AKU teachers, who are recognized for their teaching excellence in higher education, and who are expected to raise the status of teaching within the university as well as inspire and mentor their peers. The 14 inaugural members of the AKU TA comprise of 12 Fellows of Advance HE that include, one Associate Fellow, nine Fellows and two Senior Fellows.

The application process for membership was a competitive and rigorous peer-reviewed process which drew upon the UKPSF to establish standards to be met by applicants. In addition to other criteria, applicants were expected to demonstrate excellence in teaching.

The applicants claimed to have found the whole application process reflective and transformative to their teaching.

#### What Next?

Our QTL\_net team is a global faculty development support team comprising 13 staff members and we support over 500 faculty members across three continents in which AKU campuses are located. The TA members are a welcome addition to the QTL\_net team as they have doubled our resource pool and mean we will be able to reach out to more faculty members.

In particular, members of the TA are expected to mentor their peers across the university thereby helping to contribute to the development of excellent teachers within the wider university. Together with our other 32 Fellows, we are advocates of promoting teaching and learning activities at AKU and supporting the university's teaching mission. The inclusion of TA members and teaching Fellows contributes towards a more sustainable faculty development support plan for the University.

In our part of the world, research is still a developing arena and competing with leading global institutions in this field brings mixed results and feelings. However, good teaching is something we can engage in, especially if professional development opportunities are made available to faculty members. Through this initiative, AKU faculty members will have access to more in-house professional development and peer mentoring support which we envisage will lead to increased visibility, value, and status of teaching at the University.

We are proud of the strides we have made in establishing a Teachers' Academy and look forward to exciting times ahead in the teaching and learning landscape of the University. We would like to know what you think about the role of mentors drawn from faculty members in growing the resource base of educational development centres.

Find out how Advance HE can support your institution on their journey of teaching excellence and accreditation.

[Find out more](#)

# new content + publications

## Diversity monitoring data

Advance HE publishes updated guidance on how to collect data about the identity characteristics of staff and students in UK higher education.

[Access the publication](#)



## Placements? Speak to those older students on the course

In the final piece in our series on employability, Vianna Renaud, Placement Development Advisor for the Faculty of Media and Communication at Bournemouth University and ASET Trustee, shares her thoughts on the potential impact of her research on peer to peer employability coaching and mentoring within the sector.

[Find out more](#)

## Dr John Amaechi OBE: “There’s an implication for the things that clever people choose not to know.”

John Amaechi OBE, a respected organisational psychologist, best-selling New York Times author, sought after public speaker, executive coach and Founder of APS Intelligence, discussed how leaders in HE can effectively tackle racism at a Race Equality and Leadership webinar, hosted by the Scottish Funding Council and Advance HE.

[Find out more](#)



## Digital by Design at Bradford College

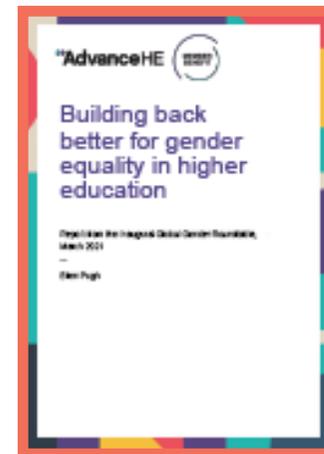
Project success story from Bradford College’s transition from a face to face teaching model to a blended approach.

[Find out more](#)

## Building back better for Gender Equality in higher education

Advance HE invited funders and policy makers in HE from around the world to attend a gender roundtable in order to share information, ideas and experiences as well as identify initiatives to improve gender equality. This report provides a summary of the round table discussions.

[Access the publication](#)



## Moving reflection online

Marina Harvey, Principal Fellow and Higher Education Scholar, Sydney, writes about the need to move reflection online and shares resources to support learners and educators.

[Find out more](#)

## “Decolonising work requires sincerity, commitment to discomfort and challenge and room for both growth and accountability”

In support of International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March) we spoke to Mia Liyanage, associate researcher for the Anti-Racist Curriculum Project in Scotland.

[Find out more](#)



## The Big Conversation: experience and expertise – supporting EDI leaders and practitioners

Ivana Vasic Chalmers, EDI researcher and advocate, invites you to participate in a whole-conference conversation exploring the skills and knowledge ‘diversity workers’ need beyond 2021: an exercise in co-production of knowledge.

[Find out more](#)

# Dates for the diary

## Conferences + Events

### Surveys & Insights Conference 2021

28 April 2021- Virtual

This conference provides an opportunity to discuss and debate the potential of insights from surveys, metrics and qualitative research.

[Find out more](#)

### Employability Symposium 2021: 3Es for Wicked Problems

22 April 2021- Virtual

This event provides a space to recognise and promote good practice where employability, enterprise and entrepreneurship are part of the curriculum, bringing together cutting-edge examples of how sustainable and innovative approaches can be delivered at school, faculty/college and/or institutional levels.

[Find out more](#)

### Principal Fellow writing retreat

29 April 2021- Virtual

The Principal Fellow Writing Retreat is an invaluable opportunity to have the time and space to progress your application to become a Principal Fellow, receiving expert analysis and feedback in the process. Held over one day, the retreat offers you the chance to transform your rough notes and thoughts into an application that matches Advance HE's strict criteria for Principal Fellowship.

[Find out more](#)

### Athena Swan Charter Engagement Event (for professional, technical and operational directorates in UK universities)

5 May 2021 - Virtual - Member event

This engagement event is specifically tailored for professional, technical and operational directorates in UK universities to discuss and feedback on recent developments in the transformation of the Charter.

[Find out more](#)

### Athena Swan Charter Engagement Event (for UK research institute applicants)

6 May 2021 - Virtual - Member event

This engagement event is specifically tailored for UK research institute applicants to discuss and feedback on recent developments in the transformation of the Charter.

[Find out more](#)

### Innovation in Teaching Practice Workshops

18 May 2021- Virtual

A series of one-day online workshops covering a range of topics relevant to teaching and learning in HE. Upcoming workshops include: [Gamification 2](#) (24 May 2021) and [Balancing tensions: Identifying impactful and effective pedagogic practices for a volatile post Covid-19 world 2](#) (17 June 2021).

[Find out more](#)

### Connect Member Benefit -Transforming Organisations: from student to Board Webinar

17 May 2021 - Virtual - Member event

This webinar is part of our April/May Connect Benefit Series Transforming Organisations: from student to board, which explores transforming organisations from the perspective of different stakeholder groups, and consider how our HEI's can bring about authentic strategic and cultural change.

This webinar is focused on approaches to good practice in organisational transformation, top tips and examples.

[Find out more](#)

### Leading Student Engagement in Times of Crisis and Transformation: Student Engagement Conference 2021

26 May 2021- Virtual

New for 2021, this one-day event will focus good practice in engaging students, the student voice and student participation in the governance and decision-making processes.

[Find out more](#)

### Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Conference 2021: Radical and Creative Partnership working

18 May 2021- Virtual

Delivered in collaboration with MWBHE (Mental Wellbeing in Higher Education) Expert Group, this one-day conference will address issues of mental health and wellbeing across all aspects of higher education.

[Find out more](#)



[Find out more about our development programmes](#)

# Dates for the diary

## Development Programmes

### Strategic Leadership Programme

Starts 22 April 2021

Build the confidence and skills to lead, engage and influence across your team, institution and the sector. The deadline for application submissions is 19 April 2021.

[Find out more](#)

### Spotlight Series for Senior Strategic Leaders (Series II)

6 May 2021

This second series has been put in place to focus on four core, topical challenge areas: positive engagement, inclusion, conflict and creativity. These half-day, impactful sessions will support senior leaders to reset, re-energise, and rejuvenate as the sector moves into the 'next normal'. Book all four sessions for a discounted rate.

[Find out more](#)

### Enhancing Programme Leadership

6 May 2021

This new programme aims to support programme leaders at a time when they may be new to leadership, or looking to gain confidence in their leadership skills. It will address their unique challenges, opportunities and realities, by developing their networks and skills and providing tools to enable them to thrive in this unique role.

[Find out more](#)

### Senior Women's Leadership Programme

7 May 2021

Senior Women's Leadership Development Programme is one of our women-only programmes designed specifically for women in senior positions in HE to help them take the next step up or extend their role, profile and impact.

[Find out more](#)

### Fellowship Application Builder

10 May 2021

A short online, self-directed course of six units designed to provide support and guidance to develop your application for Fellowship. Each unit is self-directed and can be undertaken at your own pace.

[Find out more](#)

### GDP: Induction to Higher Education Governance for new Governors

11 May 2021

This one-day event provides an opportunity for new Governors to come together to understand their roles and responsibilities as members of the governing body. We will consider the policy landscape, the delineation between governance and management, and consider how best to hit the ground running as an effective Governor.

[Find out more](#)

### Research Team Leadership

7 July 2021

Research Team Leadership in Changing Times is a two-day online course designed to develop your skills as a research team leader with particular reference to supporting research leaders and their teams in these changing times.

[Find out more](#)



[Find out more about our development programmes](#)