

Scholarship and academic capitals: the bounded nature of education-focused career tracks

Susan Smith ^a and David Walker^b

^aDepartment of Accounting and Finance, University of Sussex Business School, University of Sussex, Brighton, UK; ^bVice Chancellor's Office, University of Brighton, Brighton, UK

ABSTRACT

Education-focused roles represent a large and rapidly increasing share of the academic workforce in UK higher education. This expansion has resulted in the emergence of dedicated career tracks running in parallel with established teaching and research routes. Role descriptors and promotion criteria for these roles typically require evidence of scholarship. Despite their establishment, academics on these tracks face considerable challenges in pursuit of career advancement due to the varied definitions and expected outputs from scholarship. This exploratory study analysed the role descriptors and promotion criteria of 48 mid-sized UK universities. The findings point to significant differences between the titling of roles on education-focused career pathways, definitions of scholarship, expectations in terms of impact and the relationship of scholarship vis-à-vis pedagogic research. These differences risk creating bounded careers for those who pursue, education-focused roles, reinforcing notions of hierarchy in academic pathways within the Academy.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 18 May 2021
Accepted 28 July 2021

KEYWORDS

Scholarship; teaching; education-focused; SOTL; Bourdieu; academic promotion; higher education; criteria; role descriptors; career

Introduction

The ambiguity in definition and understanding of scholarship (Fanghanel et al. 2016) leads to differences in perception of the nature and evaluation of scholarship work (Billot et al. 2017), impacting both career progression and orientation of scholarship activities. As education-focused academic roles continue to grow as a share of the academic workforce (HESA 2021a), role descriptions and promotion criteria have been developed to provide full career pathways from entry-level to professor. For example, a recent Chartered ABS membership survey found that 75% of its respondents had a defined promotion route to professor in teaching and learning (Chartered Association of Business Schools 2019). The rationale for the inclusion of scholarship as part of education-focused career paths is linked to the expectation of its impact on higher education (Woodhouse 2010). We use the term education-focused career paths to encompass both teaching only and education and scholarship careers, consistent with the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) definition of Academic Employment Function.

CONTACT Susan Smith  susan.smith@sussex.ac.uk  University of Sussex Business School, University of Sussex, Brighton BN1 9SL, UK

© 2021 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way.

The advent of education-focused career paths has created tension between those on traditional and well-understood research and teaching tracks and those on the newer ones with the well-intentioned aspiration of parity of esteem, often faltering beyond the rhetorical framings of the institution. Whilst many Universities have developed role descriptions and promotion criteria for education-focused career tracks which include scholarship related criteria (Macfarlane 2011) there continues to be uncertainty in relation to scholarship activity and outputs (Bennett et al. 2018) as the evaluation of scholarship activity does not yet have established sector norms. The variation in institutional frameworks and the recognition accorded to scholarship has been documented in the literature (Chalmers 2011) with a dichotomy between institutional endorsement and dismissal often taking place (Manarin and Abrahamson 2016).

Various models are emerging at a discipline level which seek to add clarity to the debate on education-focused careers e.g. in Business Schools (Anderson and Mallanaphy 2020). This study adds to existing work undertaken in relation to promotion criteria in the Australian context (Vardi and Quin 2011). It is positioned through the lens of those whose task it is to interpret such criteria in the pursuit of professional advancement. A Bourdieusian framework is used to help illuminate the power relationships within the field of academia and the different capital profiles of those following education-focused career paths and undertaking scholarship activity. The research explores how scholarship is incorporated into education-focused career paths and the extent to which the resultant role descriptions and criteria create institution-specific capitals which may not be easily exchanged for similar positions at other institutions.

The findings highlight the diverse articulation of scholarship and scholarly behaviour across universities creating a veil of confusion amongst academics (Canning and Masika 2020). The debate is advanced through a number of policy recommendations to provide some much-needed clarity in the sector leading to a reevaluation of the capitals of education-focused academics within the field of academia.

In search of a definition of scholarship

Boyer's seminal work concluded that there was a 'need for a more inclusive view of what it means to be a scholar – a recognition that knowledge is acquired through research, through synthesis, through practice and through teaching' (Boyer 1990, 24). His work marked the birth of the scholarship of teaching as one of the four distinct but overlapping forms of scholarship, discovery, integration, application and teaching. However, uncertainty persisted in relation to the distinction between the act of teaching and the scholarship of teaching (Hutchings and Shulman 1999). This uncertainty may be traced back to Boyer's view that academics would engage in all types of scholarship rather than the increasing disaggregation of tasks that is common in contemporary academia (Boshier 2009). Hutchings and Shulman (1999) elaborated scholarship of teaching as comprising the following characteristics – public, open to critique and evaluation, in a form others can build on and including question-asking, inquiry and investigation. At the same time, they extend the emphasis to include learning and thereby establishing the term scholarship of teaching and learning (SOTL) (Shulman 2000) that is now ubiquitous.

The literature identifies the complexity in relation to arriving at a shared definition with scholarly teaching often conflated with SOTL (Potter and Kustra 2011) despite

definitions being offered which seek to distinguish the two (Shulman 2000). However, in face of continued attempts to create an enduring definition, SOTL continues to be described as a big tent, promoting inclusivity, although somewhat problematically, without defined boundaries (Chick 2014).

Boyer argued that scholarship can be evaluated rigorously even if its outlets are beyond refereed journals (Boyer 1990), however, the operationalisation of such evaluation has been vexed in a sector where success and quality are defined by a hierarchical structure of refereed journal publications (Boshier 2009). The Dimensions of Activities Related to Teaching (DART) model proposed by Kern et al. (2015) adopts a novel approach by focusing instead on the placement of scholarship activity along four dimensions which helps to provide context to the evolution of activities from practice of teaching to the SOTL moving from informal to formal and private to public. In this respect, the distinction between the sharing about teaching and SOTL becomes clear due to the rigour of systematic investigation required by SOTL (Kern et al. 2015). Such an approach also reflects the findings from the promotion criteria studied by Vardi and Quin (2011).

SOTL credibility has previously been found to be linked to publications and citations (Billot et al. 2017) despite it offering a seemingly limitless range of outlets and opportunities to display impact. This has led to ongoing uncertainty around the appropriate means for sharing SOTL work (Felten 2013). A number of taxonomies have emerged in an attempt to add clarity (Kern et al. 2015; Miller-Young and Yeo 2015) e.g. Felton identified a framework to help forward our understanding of good practice in SOTL based on four principles: inquiry focused on student learning, contextually grounded, methodologically sound, conducted in partnership with students and appropriately public (Felten 2013). These have been variously added to by others e.g. methodological aspects (Miller-Young and Yeo 2015). It has also been argued that SOTL is now closer to Boyer's scholarship of discovery or a hybrid between the scholarships of discovery and teaching (Potter and Kustra 2011).

A recent study warns that the scholarly aspects of SOTL are under threat (Canning and Masika 2020). The authors found that 'there were no clear attempts to exclude anyone or anything from their definitions other than activities that were not directly related to learning and teaching' (Canning and Masika 2020, 2). They argue that part of the tension has been created by the fact that Boyer didn't consider the research of teaching and learning as part of his theoretical model and that this creates inconsistency between the scholarships of discovery and teaching. Such arguments can also be linked to the Research Excellence Framework's (REF) treatment of SOTL research (Tierney 2020). The REF is a periodic research assessment exercise undertaken across the UK higher education sector by expert panels. It is known to be the case that in some institutions those on teaching and scholarship contracts are not allowed to be included in their disciplinary REF return (Chalmers 2011). This narrative of difference between pedagogic and other research is 'increasingly embedded into institutional structures' (Cotton, Miller, and Kneale 2018, 1633). An alternative approach would be to include such individuals in the education department return, however, significant practical difficulties are identified in collating and entering this data (Cotton, Miller, and Kneale 2018). Relatedly, the exclusion from REF was found to negatively affect the status of education-focused academics, often rendering their work invisible to their colleagues (Tierney 2020). A sector concern has been that teaching and research staff who do not meet their institution's REF criteria

in terms of output have been migrated onto education-focused pathways setting up a narrative that the pathway is a form of punishment (Bennett et al. 2018). Anderson and Mallanaphy (2020) assert 'It is clear that some B&M schools are seeking to establish a new career path for staff that do not meet the REF requirement' (7). Other tensions have been identified in relation to the casualisation of academic labour and use of temporary teaching-focused roles where limited workload allocation is prescribed for pedagogically driven research loosely defined as scholarship irrespective whether of the employee's prior experience, interest or expertise lies in this area (Megoran & Mason, 2020).

To date, little research has been undertaken on the extent to which SOTL is incorporated into education focused career paths and progression. Over 20 years ago Trigwell et al. (2000) identified that promotion criteria were beginning to emerge in Australian universities – and at a disciplinary level in areas of UK higher education – and that this was challenged by the absence and consistent application of an agreed model of SOTL. The British Academy of Management White paper (Anderson and Mallanaphy 2020) also identifies a lack of consistency across the sector citing diverse criteria for promotion and role descriptions. This can lead to academics becoming 'stranded' in an institution, having achieved promotion under a certain structure but unable to fulfil the criteria at the same level elsewhere.

Bourdieu's analytical framework

Bourdieu's analytical framework offers a way of understanding social interaction that is usefully applied to the dynamics of the academic field (Fogarty and Zimmerman 2019). The framework advanced by Bourdieu comprises a theory of social structure or field, power relationships or capitals, and the individual or habitus (Chiapello and Baker 2011). The field is mobilised as a framing concept to help explain the multiple interactions of the social world. However, the field boundaries can be delineated differently depending on the perspective of the inquiry (Shenkin and Coulson 2007). In this case, the field under consideration is UK academia. This field is hierarchical with different Universities occupying different spaces depending on the categorisations applied e.g. pre-92 (traditional, research-intensive universities) and post-92 (modern, teaching-intensive universities, typically comprising former polytechnics). Following Bourdieu's three-part analytical approach, we undertake an analysis in relation to the field of power or state; second, we map of the relationships between the positions occupied by the agents or institutions competing within the field i.e. those on traditional teaching and research career paths and those on education focused career paths and third, we undertake an examination of the habitus of agents (Wacquant 1989).

Changes to the academy since Bourdieu's writings have led to an evolution in the definition of academic capital and its power through the reproduction of the professoriate (Bourdieu 1988, 78). Marketisation of the sector has influenced the nature of academic capital (Collyer 2015), through the advent of education-focused roles designed, at least initially, to fulfil the political demands for rapid expansion of higher education. Rather than leading to perceptions of devaluation of academic careers (Bourdieu 1988, 152–158) this change in the composition of the field led directly to the growth of alternative academic careers. For example, Universities have worked to define their position in

the market as research-intensive or professionally/vocationally oriented. The focus on differentiation through mission influences the student and academic profile and hence the career structures of each institution. Typically, those institutions which converted to Universities from Polytechnics following the Further and Higher Education Act of 1992 are more focused on teaching than research. However, education-focused roles exist across the full range of Universities in the UK although the balance between research-focused and education-focused faculty may differ.

Bourdieu observes that ‘The notion of a profession is dangerous because it has all appearances of false neutrality in its favour’ (Wacquant 1989, 37) and the hierarchies and power relations that are embedded in professions serve to elevate the symbolic capital of members. The higher education habitus encourages its participants to accept various capitals as valuable and work to maintain and grow certain capitals (Greaves 2015). Capitals can be social, cultural or symbolic (Bourdieu 1986). Social capital enables members of the field to access other capitals but itself requires the ‘investment of both economic and cultural resources’ (Portes 1998). For traditional research academics this is being part of an academic department, publishing work in relevant academic journals and attending conferences with their peers as well as fulfilling teaching duties. Those on education-focused career paths can be partially excluded (Portes 1998) from the research community within their academic department as they do not typically form part of the disciplinary research groupings. They may also struggle to form external relationships as a result of the significant teaching loads they carry which can lead to a lack of time to attend conferences. Further, there can also be an institutional resistance to providing comparable funding to education-focused academics to attend conferences on the same basis as research academics (Anderson and Mallanaphy 2020). Cultural capital relates to credibility within the field and can be embodied, objectified and symbolic. In the field of higher education embodied cultural capital relates to how the academic presents themselves e.g. the office environment (Carter and Spence 2014), the teaching space, etc. Qualifications are institutional cultural capitals and the process of undertaking doctoral-level study serves as an assimilation into the field as students learn to value and emulate the capitals, with many becoming enveloped in the game or ‘illusio’ (Bourdieu 2010). All forms of capital are eventually translated into economic capital however, in academia it may not be the most important form of capital as claimed by Bourdieu (Bourdieu 1986), with symbolic and cultural capital taking precedence.

The capital profile of those on education-focused career paths differs from those who have followed the traditional teaching and research path. For some, who enter mid-career but without having completed doctoral-level studies there is a different institutional capital profile, for others who enter directly from doctoral studies a conscious choice may have been made to pursue a different career path, whilst some others may seek to start on one career path and switch at a later date. The titling of the positions and career progression opportunities often differ and can be construed as a means of securing and perpetuating differentiation through the creation of a differential form of symbolic capital. This study examines the exercise of institutional power through role description and promotion criteria and its interaction with the development of the capitals of those who pursue education-focused careers.

Framing the study

The aim of this study was to examine promotion requirements associated with education-focused career tracks, specifically investigating how role descriptors and criteria are expressed across a sample of mid-sized UK universities.

Methods and methodology

In order to address the questions related to how SOTL is incorporated into education-focused career paths and the extent to which it is a transferable capital, the study adopted an epistemologically interpretivist approach and was undertaken using publicly available role descriptors and/or promotion criteria for 48 mid-sized UK Universities, defined using HESA data as having between 17,000 and 30,000 students in 2019/2020 (HESA 2021b). In many instances both role descriptors and promotion criteria were not available and, in some instances, the full range of levels was not available. Four institutions did not have education-focused career paths reducing the sample to 44 institutions. Of the 44 institutions, data were publicly obtainable for 22, with the relevant information held behind institutional logins for the remaining 22. The availability of data is comparable to the BAM White Paper study of 109 business schools which obtained 27 responses with role descriptors or promotion criteria (Anderson and Mallanaphy 2020). The lack of transparency regarding role descriptors for the various career paths run by Universities may affect the awareness of applicants to the various posts of the different opportunities that exist and requirements for future career progression.

The researchers have considered their own positionality in relation to the study. One researcher switched mid-career into academia as an education-focused academic and is based in a Business School. This context has highlighted the challenges for colleagues who seek to pursue education-focused careers. The other researcher holds a senior leadership role for education provision in a different University including responsibility for academic professional development.

The researchers used an inductive approach to familiarise themselves with the data (Braun and Clarke 2006) and to generate initial theories to be tested through subsequent analysis. The data were uploaded to NVivo to facilitate this analysis and the scholarship part of the criteria was coded by grade for both role descriptions and promotion criteria. An equivalence chart was then created for grade levels to enable coding to be aggregated for comparison purposes. This allowed the researchers to further code the scholarship criteria at each grade. Both researchers undertook the coding process and the resolution of any differences was mutually agreed (Braun and Clarke 2020). Themes were generated and refined by a process of iteration, moving between the data and the themes (Braun and Clarke 2006) until the researchers were satisfied that a fit had been generated. Word frequency analysis was used to explore differences and commonalities in and between levels and across the institutions represented in the sample.

Findings

The analysis of the data uncovered five themes: the naming of education-focused career tracks, clarity of definition of scholarship, centrality of scholarship as part of the role

description, progression of scholarship expectations throughout the various levels and categorisation of scholarship related criteria.

Signalling difference

Findings indicate that the very naming of education-focused career paths varies across institutions with some paths referred to as teaching fellows, lecturers – teaching, teaching and scholarship or education and scholarship and others showing no external difference in title (Gretton and Raine 2017). In fact, some Universities explicitly underline that despite the contractual differences the job title for the different tracks is the same e.g. University of Bath. The most common external signalling tool was the title ‘Teaching Fellow’. This external signalling to students and other academics operates as a means of symbolic violence (Bourdieu 2010) reflecting a different capital mix of ‘Teaching Fellows’ and reinforcing their position as lesser academics.

A Readership is ordinarily associated with research excellence representing an intermediate role between that of Senior/Principal Lecturer and Professor. The existence of comparable roles on education-focused career pathways was found to be variable, either absent or reflected in an alternative designation. The implication of this vacuum is further weight to posited arguments that research excellence is not a possible outcome of SOTL. Consequently, this serves to further embed the difference between disciplinary research and pedagogic research (Cotton, Miller, and Kneale 2018).

Scholarship definition

Given the disputed definition of scholarship and its associated outputs it was surprising that few institutions clearly defined what they mean by scholarship before then elaborating on the level specific requirements. Only two institutions in the sample provided a definition of scholarship in the context of the role descriptors and promotion criteria.

Scholarship includes publishing the outcomes of any pedagogic work in outlets of appropriate standing and influence, leading and contributing to bids for funding for student experience and education, or other scholarship activities in line with the overall strategy of the School/Institute and Faculty. It also covers work to influence the higher education agenda in a specific disciplinary area or more generally, and using scholarship to engage in a range of activities that influence society, economy, industry, government or public policy. (Queen Mary University of London (QMUL))

The definition adopted by QMUL goes beyond SOTL definitions, and is broad including all pedagogic work and going beyond the teaching and learning sphere. The translation of ‘appropriate standing and influence’ is largely undefined leaving readers uncertain how this will be evaluated by appointment and promotion panels. The second definition is outlined below:

Engaging in scholarship of the theory and practice of education to engender innovative and evidence-led approaches to teaching. (University of Bristol)

The Bristol definition might be thought to be closer to scholarly teaching (Potter and Kustra 2011), however, the indicative evidence offered alongside the broader categorisation implies that the scholarship goes beyond individual practice and is intended to be shared internally across the university or externally. By confirming the legitimacy

of both internal and external outlets this definition appears to deviate from the public sharing of SOTL through the publication of other means that forms the cornerstone of Shulman's definition (2000) and has been reinforced through the work of others e.g. Kern's DART model (2015).

Prominence of scholarship within role descriptors

Differences in career track do not seem to be reflected in the emphasis placed on expected engagement with scholarship. This was identified, for example, in the role descriptors for the universities of Warwick and Strathclyde which were notably at a similar level to those institutions where explicit Education and Scholarship tracks featured e.g. University of Exeter and University of Sussex.

Arguably scholarship is broader than pedagogic research, yet our findings indicated that a variety of terms are used almost interchangeably and without a clear explanation of the differences (Boshier 2009). Some illustrative quotes are outlined below:

Engage in relevant scholarly activity, or professional and/or pedagogic research. (University of Bristol)

This quote indicates that there are three different elements, scholarly activity, professional research and pedagogic research. It may be the case that the DART model (Kern et al. 2015) can support the variation through the placement of scholarly activity in the scholarly teaching category and professional and pedagogic research as a subset of SOTL category.

Pedagogic activity. (University of Durham)

Pedagogic activity progresses from activities which have a sphere of influence restricted to a department to those that are international. This also has the potential to map to Kern's model (Kern et al. 2015) as individuals move from sharing their practice internally to sharing it nationally and then internationally as their sphere of influence increases. Other definitions seek to cover all potential types of activity:

Engage in pedagogic and practitioner research and other scholarly activities. (University of Sussex and University of Strathclyde)

In this instance, the range of indicative evidence showed a progression from presentations at teaching and learning events at level 7 (i.e. sharing practice internally) to leadership in the field at level 10 evidenced through peer-reviewed publications (i.e. SOTL).

Our analysis identified a general shift from the use of scholarship to a greater emphasis on educational/pedagogic research at the higher levels of the career pathway. For example, Senior Teaching Fellow 'Engage in scholarly activities related to subject area and higher education practice' to Principal Teaching Fellow at the same institution 'Engage in educational research and other scholarly activities'.

However, there were also exceptions with some institutions retaining a broad view of scholarship at the professorial level:

Publish very high quality scholarly learning resources and/or books for wider dissemination. (The University of Exeter)

The ability to build from a scholarship focus, centred on one's own practice to pedagogic research focus may be limited and therefore contribute to the low numbers of education-focused professors.

Comparison of scholarship at each level

Scholarship criteria were compared at different role levels to identify commonalities and also differences across the institutions that formed the dataset. We undertook this analysis using word frequency for each level from the role descriptors and promotion criteria obtained (Table 1). Teaching was highly ranked in all cases reflecting the primary requirement of those on education-focused career pathways to deliver teaching. It is clear that the sphere of influence increases at the higher ends of the career structure with Professors being asked to evidence national and international reputations. At the Senior lecturer/Reader level leadership in the form of developing others came through as an important aspect of the criteria.

Categorisation of criteria

The categorisation of criteria leads to the classification of pedagogic research as research in some institutions and as education or teaching in others and further indicates the lack of consistency across the sector. Table 2 outlines the variation in classification of scholarship activity across the role descriptors and promotion criteria obtained.

The treatment of scholarship varies across these institutions and is most likely linked to two factors, its centrality in the promotion process and the time which academics are allocated to engage with scholarship activity. If scholarship outputs are a central requirement for promotion, then time needs to be diverted from teaching to scholarship within the institutional workload. This brings a financial cost to Universities who originally conceived education focused roles as a means of managing the rapid growth experienced across the sector in response to the massification of higher education. Providing more workload time for staff to undertake scholarship activity would require additional hiring activity and reduce the already stretched sector finances which are suffering fee freezes for UK domiciled students, increasing pension scheme contributions and uncertain international student recruitment, see e.g. (Bolton 2021). Anderson and Mallanaphy (2020) found that across Business Schools the workload allocation to scholarship activity varied from 6% to as much as 40% with a median of 12.5%. This is in contrast to those on research-focused career pathways which typically have a uniform time allocation of 40% for research activity. As a result, the volume of output that is possible for those on education-focused career pathways will vary from institution to institution (and sometimes also across institutions) and may serve to limit the ability of those on such career routes

Table 1. Word frequency by role.

Top words in order of frequency	Lecturer (grade 7)	Lecturer (grade 8)	Senior Lecturer (grade 9)	Reader (grade 9)	Professor (grade 10)
1	research	teaching	teaching	learning	teaching
2	appropriate	research	research	teaching	learning
3	area	scholarship	development	development	national
4	course	evidence	evidence	education	international
5	knowledge	activities	external	scholarship	professional

Source: author analysis of promotion criteria and role descriptors.

Table 2. Classifications of scholarship activity.

University	Criteria group/classification of scholarship activity
Bournemouth University	Academic research output
Durham University	University Educational Impact Benchmark
Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine	Research – provides guidance on using educational publications for promotion, discussing four types of pedagogic literature – practice, research, theoretical, policy
Leeds Beckett University	Teaching and learning outputs
Liverpool John Moores University	Learning and Teaching and the Student Experience
Loughborough University	Teaching and educational development
Middlesex University	Measurement of excellence in teaching
Queen Mary University of London	Scholarship
Swansea University	Esteem
University of Bath	'Contributions to scholarship may strengthen a case.' and whilst a potential source of evidence is not a required criteria
University of Brighton	Research and scholarship
University of Bristol	Scholarship of teaching and learning
University of East Anglia	Teaching and related administration, management and leadership
University of Exeter	Scholarship, Esteem and Communications
University of Reading	Optional criteria of pedagogic research/scholarship
University of Strathclyde	Research and Scholarship
University of Sussex	Scholarship
University of the Arts, London	Influence and Leadership
University of the West of Scotland	Scholarship related to Student Success
University of Warwick	Research and scholarship
University of Wolverhampton	No breakdown
University of York	Engagement with scholarly publication expected

Source: generated by authors from publicly available information.

to develop an 'international' or 'national profile' at the higher levels. Bennett et al. (2018) argue that these measures are often easier to observe than those required at earlier stages of the career ladder.

In view of the structural pressures and inconsistencies mentioned above, it was not surprising that only one institution for which data were collected specified the output quantities at each level of performance as a guide:

The criteria in Table 3 are not wholly consistent, with the illustrations at Lecturer and Senior Lecturer levels indicating how candidates can meet the 'Esteem category'. By contrast, at the Associate Professor level and above, a consistent record of publication forms part of the indicative performance level within the 'Advancing practice' category. At Swansea esteem includes interaction with the broader academic community through conferences, presentations, etc. This approach can help support individuals as they develop. However, it should be noted that the quality of the publications is not

Table 3. Levels of output.

Grade	Enhanced criteria – Teaching and Scholarship
Lecturer	Example '1 publication and 1 conference paper in a 3 year period'
Senior Lecturer	Example '2 publications and 1 conference presentation in a 5 year period relevant to teaching and learning'
Associate Professor	Indicative performance level 'At least 3 examples with evidence of national recognition in the last 5 years' Example 'evidence of a sustained record of successful publication, for example pedagogic practice, curriculum design, teaching innovations or student experience'
Professor	Indicative performance level 'A consistent record of pedagogic publication with evidence of international recognition in the past 5 years'

Source: Swansea University promotion criteria.

specified and may also serve either to facilitate faster promotion or inhibit promotion at the lower levels depending on the lens applied.

Discussion

The findings indicate a variety of different approaches to scholarship persists across the sector, with scholarship being classified differently in many instances. This is consistent with prior findings (McKinney 2004). The outcome is that institution-specific capitals are being created for those on education-focused tracks which may not be transferable. We find that outputs differ and the reliance continues to be placed on peer-reviewed publications at the highest levels with a crossover in language and expectation observed from scholarship to pedagogic research. At these higher levels, role descriptors and criteria also evidenced an expectation in some institutions for scholarship to impact or be recognised at a national or international level. The incorporation of these research-centric requirements legitimately exacerbates questions of parity and serves to reinforce a two-tier class system within the Academy. This leads to what Bennett et al. (2018) refer to as bounded careers for education-focused academics. Such an effect displays what Bourdieu would term symbolic violence (Bourdieu 2010), restricting the progression and freedom of education-focused academics whilst seemingly applying objective standards in the form of role descriptors and promotion criteria.

Clarity in progression requirements is critical as to our knowledge there are few who have successfully reached professorial level on education-focused tracks. The Chartered ABS 2019 membership survey found that 54% of respondent business schools had no education-focused professors whilst another 37% had less than 10% come through the education-focused route (Chartered Association of Business Schools 2019). Until there is a clearly established and well-used path to professorship the required levels of performance will continue to be clothed in uncertainty (Bennett et al. 2018).

Conclusion

There is a powerful case to align the institutional incentives to undertake SOTL and to reward engagement. The research has identified that a differential naming of career pathways creates an external mark of difference in capitals to students and other academics, and is synonymous with Bourdieu's symbolic violence (Bourdieu 2010). Secondly, clarity is required in the definition of what constitutes SOTL vis-à-vis pedagogic research, rather than it being adopted as a blanket term for a wide range of activities (Tight 2018). This clarity will lead to the development of clear criteria and progression routes that are more than illusory and facilitate the movement of education-focused academics across institutions. Whilst it is unclear the extent to which those reported in the HESA teaching only category comprise education-focused academics rather than sessional staff, this category has increased by 37% over the period from 2015/2016 to 2019/2020 in comparison to the research and teaching category which shrunk by 1% over the same period (HESA 2021a).

Policy recommendations for institutions are threefold: firstly, to clarify expectations around scholarship through adopting a definition and then to map progression clearly

through the various career levels; secondly to ensure that workload afforded to scholarship is adequate to achieve the specified outcomes and any cross institutional variations in allocation are clearly surfaced in promotion discussions to enable a scaling of expected outcomes and finally to adequately support those on this alternative career path so that opportunities for career progression are a reality. Ideally, institutions would work together across the sector to develop a common understanding of education-focused career pathways, a shared definition of scholarship and the associated career progression requirements.

The limitations of this study include its reliance on publicly available data and identification of a purposive sample of mid-size UK institutions based on student enrolment which may lead to a partial overview. This approach did not account for institutional categorisation or differences in institutional ethos/mission e.g. pre-92/post-92. Further studies could include investigating the role of gender or precarious contracts, exploring the perceptions and experiences of academics who are reliant on such role descriptions and promotion criteria to better understand their lived experiences.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

ORCID

Susan Smith  <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-0411-9327>

References

- Anderson, L., & Mallanaphy, C. 2020. *MKE White Paper – Education Focused Career Tracks in UK Business and Management Schools Current Practice and Recommendations for Progress*. British Academy of Management. <https://www.bam.ac.uk/bam-community/scholarship-and-education/white-paper.html>.
- Bennett, D., L. Roberts, S. Ananthram, and M. Broughton. 2018. “What Is Required to Develop Career Pathways for Teaching Academics?” *Higher Education* 75 (2): 271–286. doi:10.1007/s10734-017-0138-9.
- Billot, J., S. Rowland, B. Carnell, C. Amundsen, and T. Evans. 2017. “How Experienced SoTL Researchers Develop the Credibility of Their Work.” *Teaching & Learning Inquiry* 5 (1): 101–114. doi:10.20343/teachlearninqu.5.1.8.
- Bolton, P. (2021). *Higher Education Funding in England*. London.: House of Commons Library. <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-7973/>.
- Boshier, R. 2009. “Why is the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Such a Hard Sell?” *Higher Education Research & Development* 28 (1): 1–15. doi:10.1080/07294360802444321.
- Bourdieu, P. 1986. “The Forms of Capital.” In *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, edited by JG Richardson, 241–258. New York: Greenwood.
- Bourdieu, P. 1988. *Homo Academicus*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. 2010. *Distinction*. 1st ed. London: Routledge.
- Boyer, E. L. 1990. *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*. Lawrenceville, NJ: Princeton University Press. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED326149>.
- Braun, V., and V. Clarke. 2006. “Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology.” *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3 (2): 77–101. doi:10.1191/1478088706qp063oa.
- Braun, V., and V. Clarke. 2020. “One Size Fits All? What Counts as Quality Practice in (Reflexive) Thematic Analysis?” *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 0 (0): 1–25..

- Canning, J., and R. Masika. 2020. "The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL): The Thorn in the Flesh of Educational Research." *Studies in Higher Education* 0 (0): 1–13. doi:10.1080/03075079.2020.1836485.
- Carter, C., and C. Spence. 2014. "Being a Successful Professional: An Exploration of Who Makes Partner in the Big 4." *Contemporary Accounting Research* 31 (4): 949–981. doi:10.1111/1911-3846.12059.
- Chalmers, D. 2011. "Progress and Challenges to the Recognition and Reward of the SCHOLARSHIP of Teaching in Higher Education." *Higher Education Research & Development* 30 (1): 25–38. doi:10.1080/07294360.2011.536970.
- Chartered Association of Business Schools. 2019. *Annual Membership Survey 2019: Results and Analysis* (p. 14). London: Chartered Association of Business Schools. <https://charteredabs.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Chartered-ABS-Annual-Membership-Survey-Results-2019.pdf>.
- Chiapello, E., and R. Baker. 2011. "The Introduction of French Theory Into English Language Accounting Research." *Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal* 24 (2): 140–160. doi:10.1108/09513571111100663.
- Chick, N. L. 2014. "Methodologically Sound under the 'Big Tent': An Ongoing Conversation." *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning* 8 (2): 1–15.
- Collyer, F. M. 2015. "Practices of Conformity and Resistance in the Marketisation of the Academy: Bourdieu, Professionalism and Academic Capitalism." *Critical Studies in Education* 56 (3): 315–331. doi:10.1080/17508487.2014.985690.
- Cotton, D. R. E., W. Miller, and P. Kneale. 2018. "The Cinderella of Academia: Is Higher Education Pedagogic Research Undervalued in UK Research Assessment?" *Studies in Higher Education* 43 (9): 1625–1636. doi:10.1080/03075079.2016.1276549.
- Fanghanel, J., J. Pritchard, J. Potter, and G. Wisker. 2016. *Defining and Supporting the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL): A Sector-Wide Study*, 43. York: Advance HE.
- Felten, P. 2013. "Principles of Good Practice in SoTL." *Teaching & Learning Inquiry: The ISSOTL Journal* 1 (1): 121–125. doi:10.2979/teachlearninqu.1.1.121.
- Fogarty, T. J., and A. Zimmerman. 2019. "Few Are Called, Fewer Are Chosen: Elite Reproduction in U.S. Academic Accounting." *Critical Perspectives on Accounting* 60: 1–17. doi:10.1016/j.cpa.2018.09.001.
- Greaves, K. 2015. "Is Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Practical Legal Training a Professional Responsibility?" *The Law Teacher* 49 (1): 22–38. doi:10.1080/03069400.2014.991203.
- Gretton, S., and D. Raine. 2017. "Reward and Recognition for University Teaching in STEM Subjects." *Journal of Further and Higher Education* 41 (3): 301–313. doi:10.1080/0309877X.2015.1100714.
- HESA. 2021a, January. *Higher Education Staff Statistics: UK, 2019/20*. <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/news/19-01-2021/sb259-higher-education-staff-statistics>.
- HESA. 2021b, January. *Who's Studying in HE?* <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/students/whos-in-he#provider>.
- Hutchings, P., and L. S. Shulman. 1999. "The Scholarship of Teaching: New Elaborations, New Developments." *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning* 31 (5): 10–15. doi:10.1080/00091389909604218.
- Kern, B., G. Mettetal, M. Dixon, and R. K. Morgan. 2015. "The Role of SoTL in the Academy: Upon the 25th Anniversary of Boyer's Scholarship Reconsidered." *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, 1–14. doi:10.14434/josotl.v15i3.13623.
- Macfarlane, B. 2011. "Prizes, Pedagogic Research and Teaching Professors: Lowering the Status of Teaching and Learning Through Bifurcation." *Teaching in Higher Education* 16 (1): 127–130. doi:10.1080/13562517.2011.530756.
- Manarin, K., and E. Abrahamson. 2016. "Troublesome Knowledge of SoTL." *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning* 10 (2): n2.
- McKinney, K. 2004. "1: The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: Past Lessons, Current Challenges, and Future Visions." *To Improve the Academy* 22 (1): 3–19. doi:10.1002/j.2334-4822.2004.tb00399.x.

- Megoran, N. 2020. *Second class academic citizens: The dehumanizing effects of casualisation in higher education*. UCU
- Miller-Young, J., and M. Yeo. 2015. "Conceptualizing and Communicating SoTL: A Framework for the Field." *Teaching & Learning Inquiry: The ISSOTL Journal* 3 (2): 37–53. doi:10.2979/teachlearninqu.3.2.37.
- Portes, A. 1998. "Social Capital: Its Origins and Applications in Modern Sociology." *Annual Review of Sociology* 24 (1): 1–24. doi:10.1146/annurev.soc.24.1.1.
- Potter, M., and E. Kustra. 2011. "The Relationship Between Scholarly Teaching and SoTL: Models, Distinctions, and Clarifications." *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning* 5, doi:10.20429/ijstol.2011.050123.
- Shenkin, M., and A. B. Coulson. 2007. "Accountability Through Activism: Learning from Bourdieu." *Accounting, Auditing & Accountability Journal* 20 (2): 297–317. doi:10.1108/09513570710741037.
- Shulman, L. S. 2000. *Fostering a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*. Athens, Georgia: Institute of Higher Education, The University of Georgia. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED442420>.
- Tierney, A. 2020. "The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning and Pedagogic Research Within the Disciplines: Should It Be Included in the Research Excellence Framework?" *Studies in Higher Education* 45 (1): 176–186. doi:10.1080/03075079.2019.1574732.
- Tight, M. 2018. "Tracking the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning." *Policy Reviews in Higher Education* 2 (1): 61–78. doi:10.1080/23322969.2017.1390690.
- Trigwell, K, E Martin, J Benjamin, and M Prosser. 2000. Scholarship of teaching: A model. *Higher education research and development* 19: 155–168.
- Vardi, I., and R. Quin. 2011. "Promotion and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning." *Higher Education Research & Development* 30 (1): 39–49. doi:10.1080/07294360.2011.536971.
- Wacquant, L. 1989. "Towards a Reflexive Sociology: A Workshop with Pierre Bourdieu." *Sociological Theory* 7 (1): 26–63. doi:10.2307/202061.
- Woodhouse, R. 2010. "Hype or Hope: Can the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Fulfill Its Promise?" *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning* 4, doi:10.20429/ijstol.2010.040113.

Appendix 1. Mid-sized UK universities

HE provider	Total number of students
The University of the West of Scotland	17,025
London South Bank University	17,125
The University of Huddersfield	17,295
The University of Reading	17,805
Bournemouth University	17,880
The University of East Anglia	17,925
Loughborough University	18,025
The University of Bath	18,065
Teesside University	18,665
The University of Westminster	18,885
The University of Greenwich	18,945
University of Durham	19,025
The University of Wolverhampton	19,045
University of the Arts, London	19,095
Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine	19,115
University of Derby	19,145
The University of Sussex	19,155
The University of Kent	19,265
The University of York	19,470
Middlesex University	19,635
University of Plymouth	19,645
City, University of London	20,210
The University of Brighton	20,470
Queen Mary University of London	20,560
Swansea University	20,620
The University of Salford	20,815
The University of Cambridge	20,890
University of South Wales	22,330
The University of Strathclyde	22,640
The University of Southampton	22,715
The University of Central Lancashire	23,160
Leeds Beckett University	23,275
Liverpool John Moores University	24,030
University of Hertfordshire	24,280
Anglia Ruskin University	24,490
Ulster University	24,530
Queen's University Belfast	24,695
The University of Exeter	25,010
The University of Oxford	25,390
The University of Portsmouth	25,515
De Montfort University	25,810
Birmingham City University	25,855
The University of Bristol	25,955
The University of Warwick	26,080
University of Northumbria at Newcastle	26,450
Newcastle University	27,215
University of the West of England, Bristol	29,555
The University of Liverpool	29,695

Source: (HESA 2021b).