

Teaching-Focussed Lecturer Network

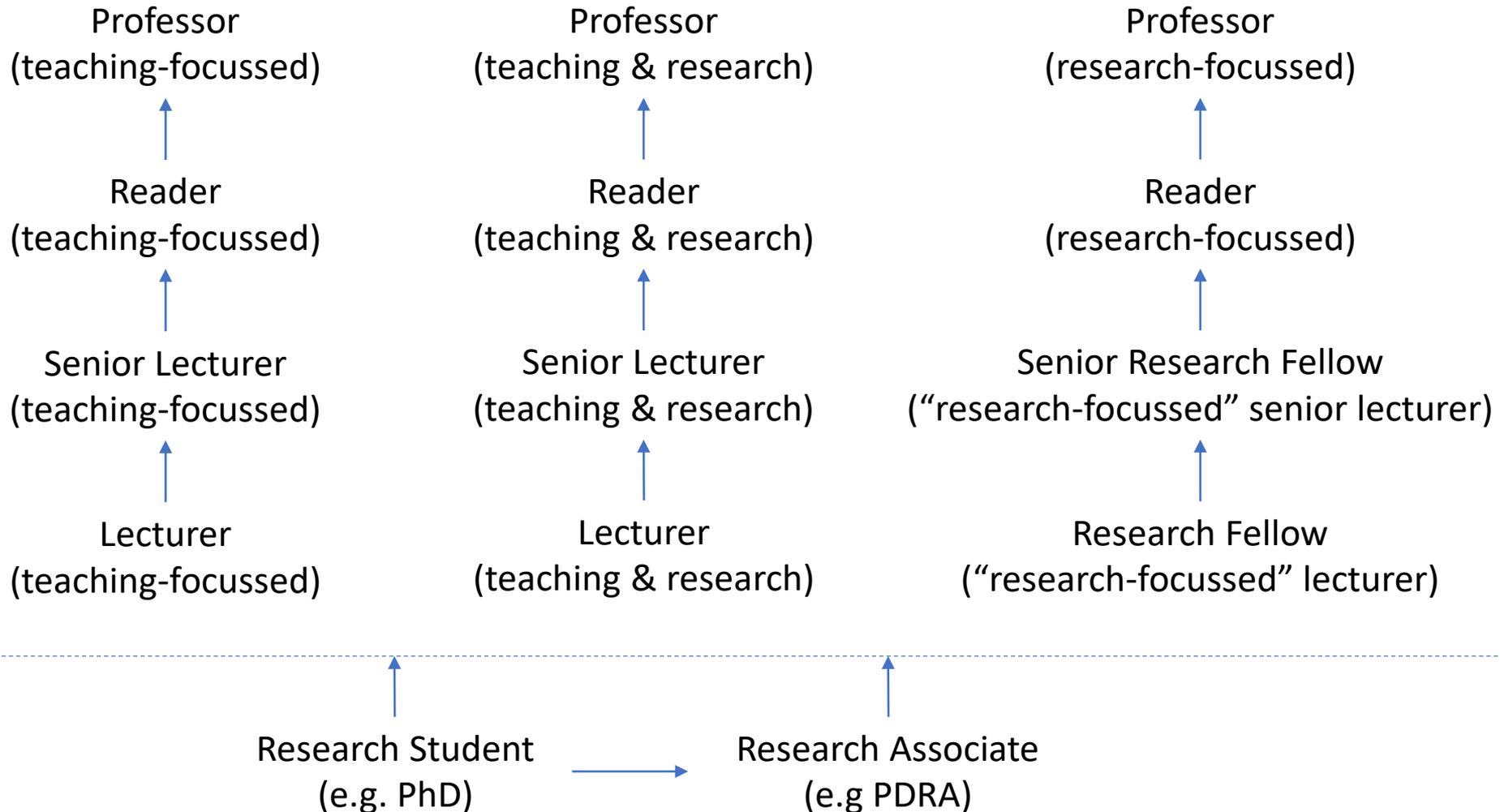
An Introduction

Dr. Nicholas Weise and **Dr. Doron Cohen**



Academic Career Pathways

...at Manchester



Some stats...

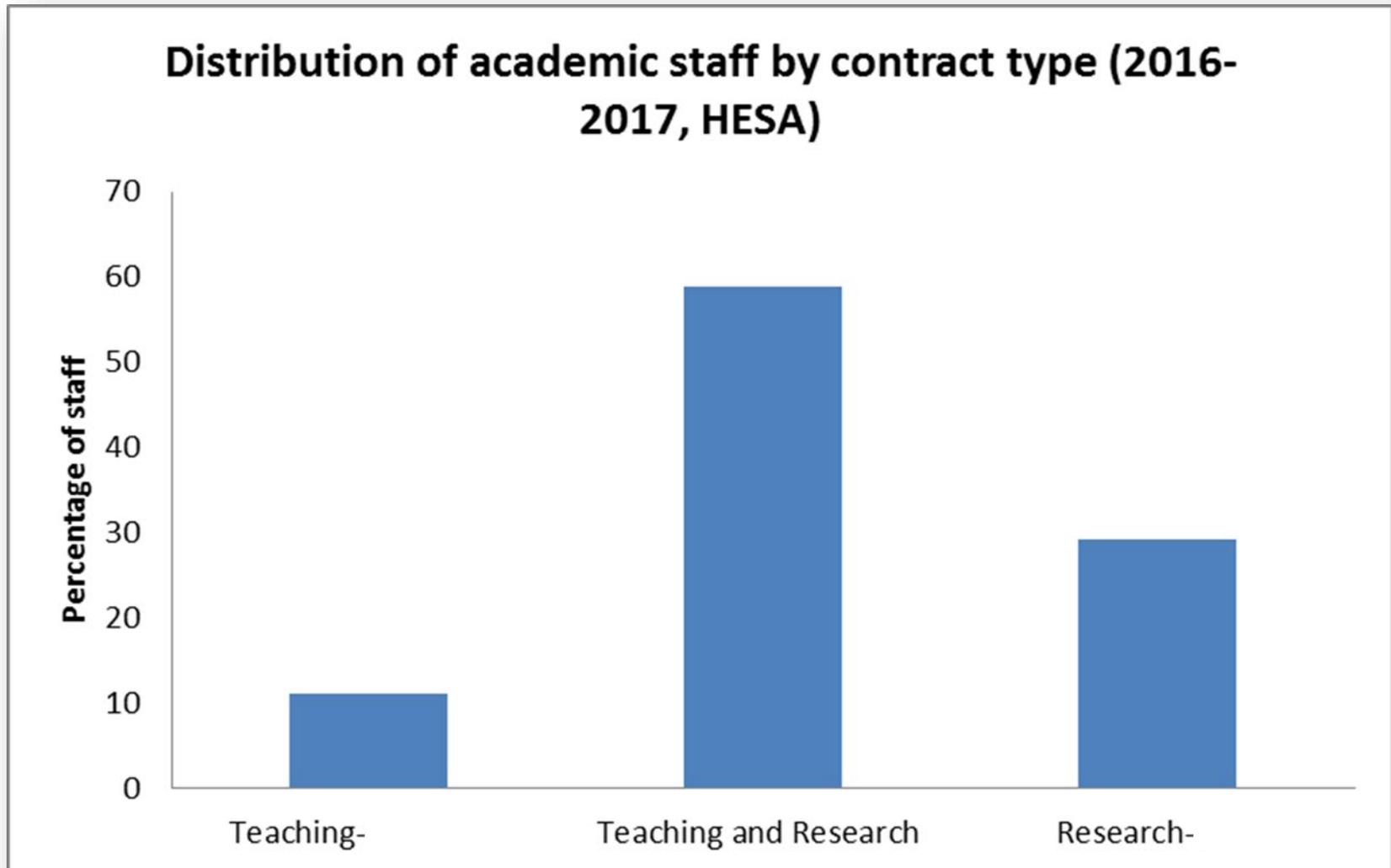
1.8 million undergrads in the UK (HESA, 2017) with expectations of high teaching quality (Dicker, 2017).

Teaching orientated academics currently make up about 11% of full time staff (HESA, 2017)

Three times more research-only contracts and five times more teaching and research staff

Given this underrepresentation of TF contracts, it's not surprising little is known about either nationally or locally about their experiences, motivations or needs

Some stats...



Origins of the Teaching Focused Network

Kersti Borjas: A 'space' for early career TF staff on the various contracts (TF, Teaching-Only, Teaching and Scholarship) to come together.

But **what** shape should this 'space' take and **who** should decide?

Kersti wanted a 'hands off approach' and invited **one TF staff member from each Faculty** to develop the idea: Nick Weise (FSE), Jennifer O'Brien (FH), Doron Cohen (FBMH)

Guiding Philosophy

We developed three overriding 'philosophical principles' about the 'shape' of the Network:

- 1. Bottom-up approach:** A Network run by junior TF staff for junior TF staff
- 2. Flexible:** A Network that adapts to and can be responsible to the needs of TF colleagues
- 3. Temporary ownership:** We will pass on the Network to new TF staff once we reach SL

Goals of the TF Network

To create a cross-faculty, university-wide Network for junior TF staff in order to:

1. Foster a **common sense** of identity/community
2. Give TF staff a **collective voice** within UoM
3. Place to turn to **discuss ideas** with 'critical' friends and **access teaching-related** support

And we knew we wanted the Network to encompass:



Social



Online



Events

Goals of the TF Network

The Network is supported by UMITL.

Ideas and feedback will be fed into the activities and strategies of the institute

The University of Manchester
**Institute of
Teaching
and Learning**

Launch event: Jan 22nd 2019!

Social event to learn more about the **experiences** of TF staff and their **career development needs**.

Created 'islands' around which attendees could rotate. At each island, flipchart paper/pens posed a different questions:

- **How did you get into your TF role?**
- **How do you feel about your career progression?**
- **What do you most/least enjoy about the role?**
- **How valued do you feel as a TF member of staff?**
- **Is there any extra support you feel you need to develop your career?**

What do **you think are** the main issues that TF colleagues face?

Emerging Themes

Some colleagues **reported feelings of isolation**, particularly in areas/institutes where TF roles are rare.

Nature of semesterised teaching means that some TF staff are working most evenings/weekends during the semester, leading to **poor (or absence of a) work-life balance**.

TF jobs feel **insecure** and staff feel **underpaid** for ‘invisible workload’.

Professional development & mentoring are **disorganised** with **line managers** not fully **understanding of the needs** of TF staff/TF route

Actions Taken

Fed this back to the **attendees** attendees at the Network and set up a **ListServ**

Fed this forward to the **Centre for Academic and Research Development**.

If we are serious about parity between TF and TR, we need to also think about '**parity of experience**'.

We wanted to tackle *one main issue* at our next event and so focused on concerns around **training and career guidance**.

May 2019: Meet the TF Professors

- Distinguished Panel: **David Spendlove** (FH), **Jason Hall** (FBMH), **Judith Williams** (FBMH), **Caroline Bowsher** (FBMH), **Andrew Horn** (FSE).
- Panel spoke about their path into the TF route and answered questions from junior TF staff:
 - **Career Progression** (the need to find up to 10 mentors)
 - **Being strategic**: one benefit of having many mentors is that they can champion your career and suggest you for appropriate committees and panels
 - **How to avoid** being ‘given’ roles you do not want/saying ‘no’
 - **Demystification** of the role/lives of TF professors (they do still teach, it’s not all meetings!)
 - **Recognition** that there isn’t currently a unified model for line management of TF academics

June 2019: Becoming a TF Lecturer

- Panel: Samaneh Maysami, Jennifer Slaughter, Hosam Aleem, Lloyd Cawthorne, Susan Taylor, Wendy Wild, Miriam Firth.
- Panel spoke about their path into the TF route and answered questions from PGRs and Staff
- The event was oversubscribed within 24 hours (120 places)
- There were many e-mail queries and a large number of PGRs and members of staff do not realise this is a career option
- This has been incorporated into GTA Inductions in FBMH
 - Is something needed at a university-wide level?

What would **you like** to see...

Briefly discuss with those around you:

- What events would you like to see the Network next organise?
- Why do you think it would be helpful?

Future Events

- Welcome back event?
 - Supporting Pedagogical Research?
 - ???
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- When should we organise things and when should we signpost?