

Professionalisation in Academic Development: Exploring learning designer roles in a changing higher education sector



THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

Create change



Project Team



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Challenges

For directors:

- Conceptualising and designing roles
- Attracting suitable staff
- Ongoing effective management
- Retention of excellent staff

For learning designers:

- Career pathways
- Professional development
- Changing role
- Project based - job security

Expected Project Outcomes

Snapshot of current Learning Designers' practices across Australian universities to identify and document:

- relevant skills, knowledge, education and professional background,
- the types of roles undertaken and employment conditions;
- challenges and enablers in these roles and conditions;
- areas for future attention

Supporting evidence-based decision-making in the conceptualisation of LD positions and the management of existing and new LD staff

Research Context

Little specific prior research:

- No audit of learning designer practice in Australia, but some US studies

(Cox & Osguthorpe 2003; Wakefield et al. 2012; Ritzhaupt & Kamar 2015)

- Academic development and third space role diversification

(Whitchurch & Gordon 2010; Gray 2015; Veles & Carter 2016; Ling & CADAD 2009)

- Changing roles for teaching and learning units

(Gosling 2008; Holt et al. 2011)

Method & Data Analysis

(Ethics Approval No.2017000315)

Online Surveys

T&L Leaders: Responses (n=16)

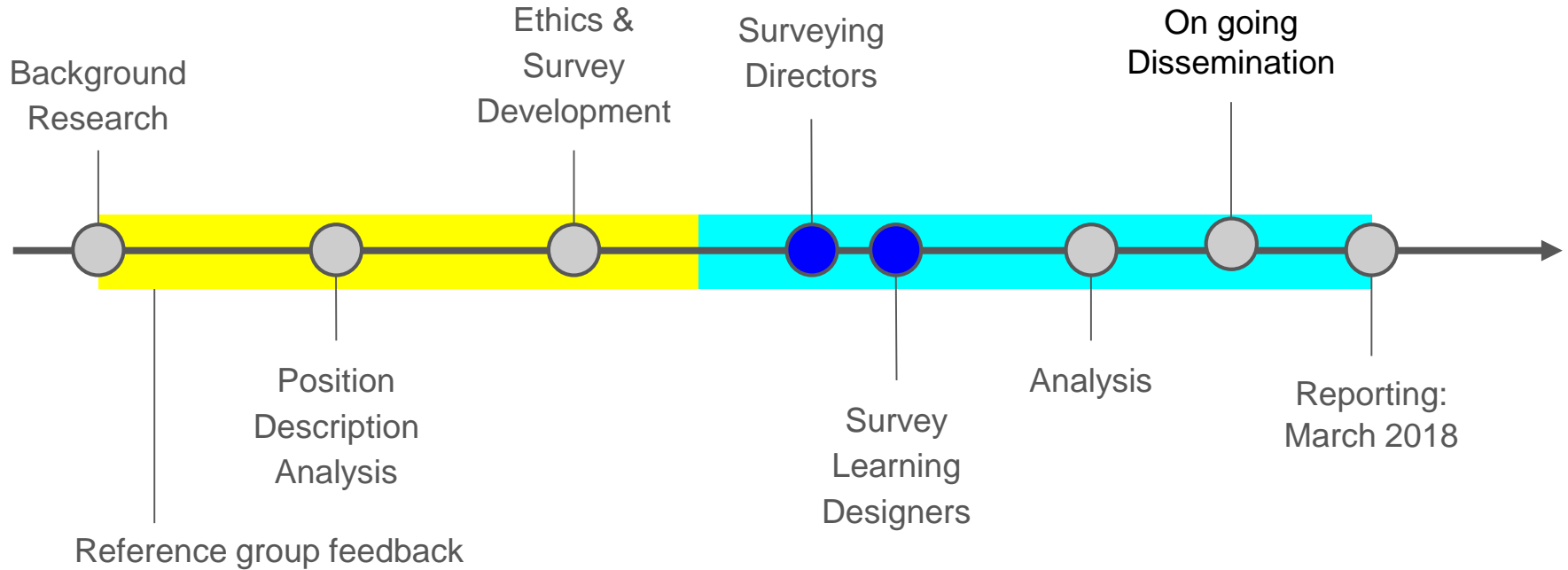
Learning Designers :Responses (n=103)

Data Analysis

Quantitative: Descriptive Stats

Qualitative: Thematic using NVivo Pro 11 (research assistant)

Thank you for your help



Qualifications

Education (primary, secondary, adult or tertiary)	67	68%
Arts	13	13%
Media	11	11%
Science	11	11%
IT	10	10%
Business or Economics	8	8%
Design	7	7%
Information Systems	6	6%
Communications and Marketing	4	4%
English	4	4%
History	4	4%
Linguistics	4	4%
Languages	3	3%
Philosophy	3	3%
Visual Arts	3	3%

71%

postgraduate

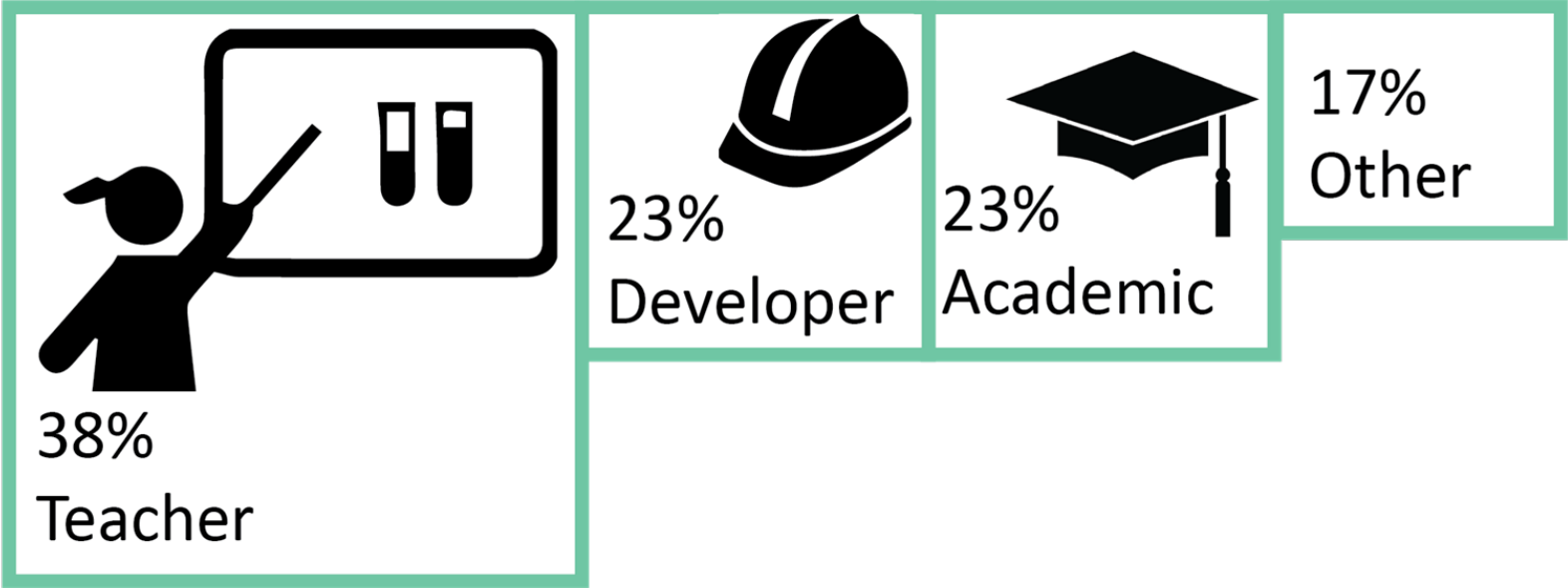
17%

undergraduate

12%

other

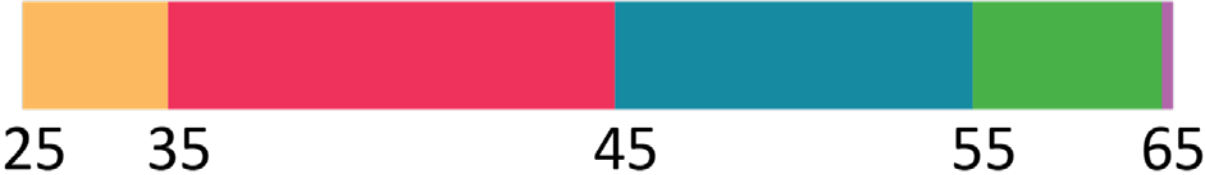
Prior Employment



Level of Employment

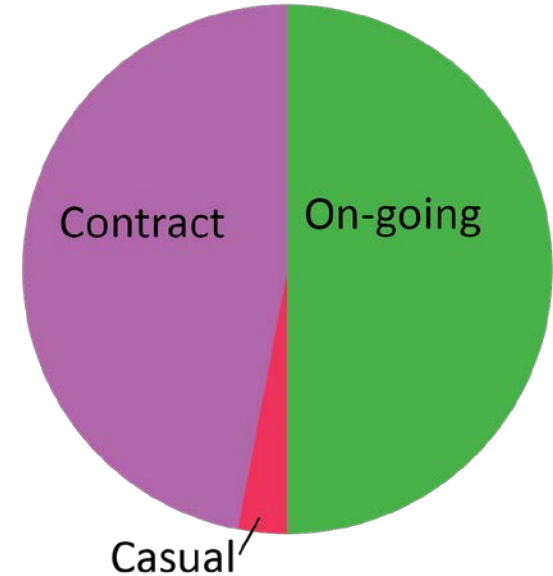
Level	No
HEW 5-6	5
HEW 7	39
HEW 8	38
HEW 9	10
Academic	8

Age

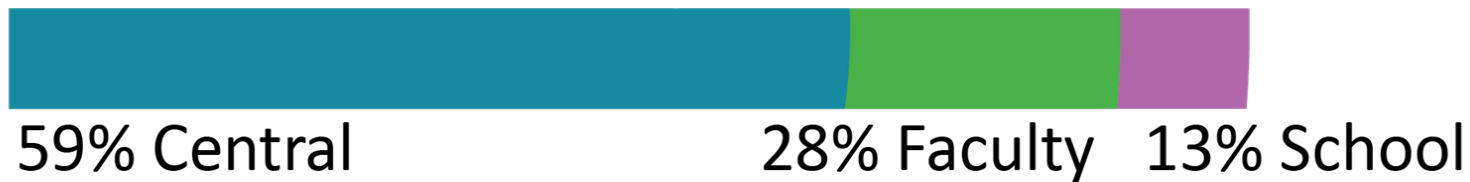


Mode of Employment for Learning Designers

	Full-time	Part-time	Total
Ongoing	47	3	50
Contract	38	9	47
Casual	2	1	3
Total	87	13	100



Location in Universities?

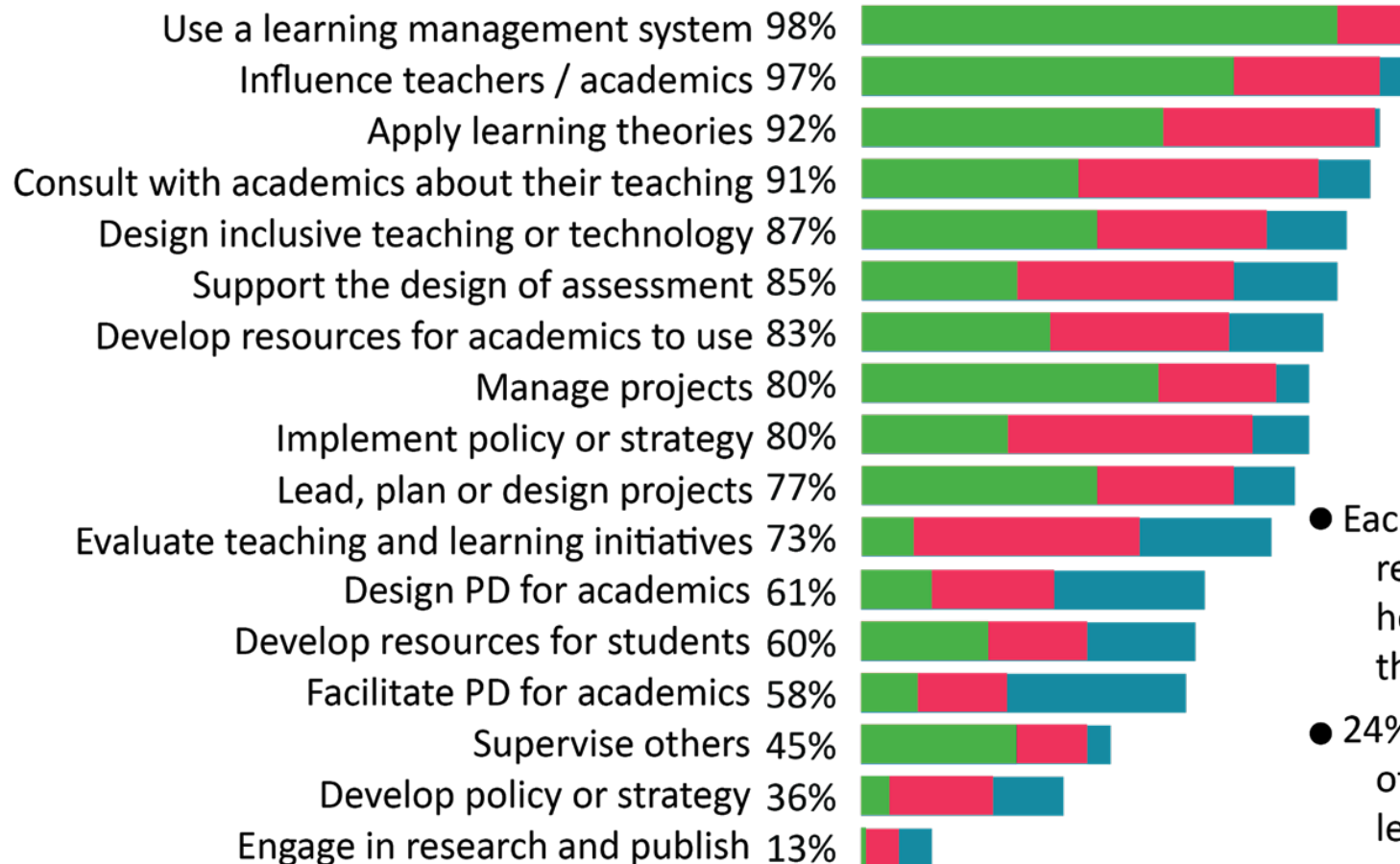


Important Attributes of Learning Designers

	Directors	LDs
Working well with academics	100%	99%
Team work	100%	97%
Oral communications skills	100%	96%
Understanding of how people learn	94%	98%
Managing time and priorities	94%	93%
Knowledge of a LMS	94%	90%
Multimedia design	31%	31%
Coding / Programming	6%	12%

What do Learning Designers do?

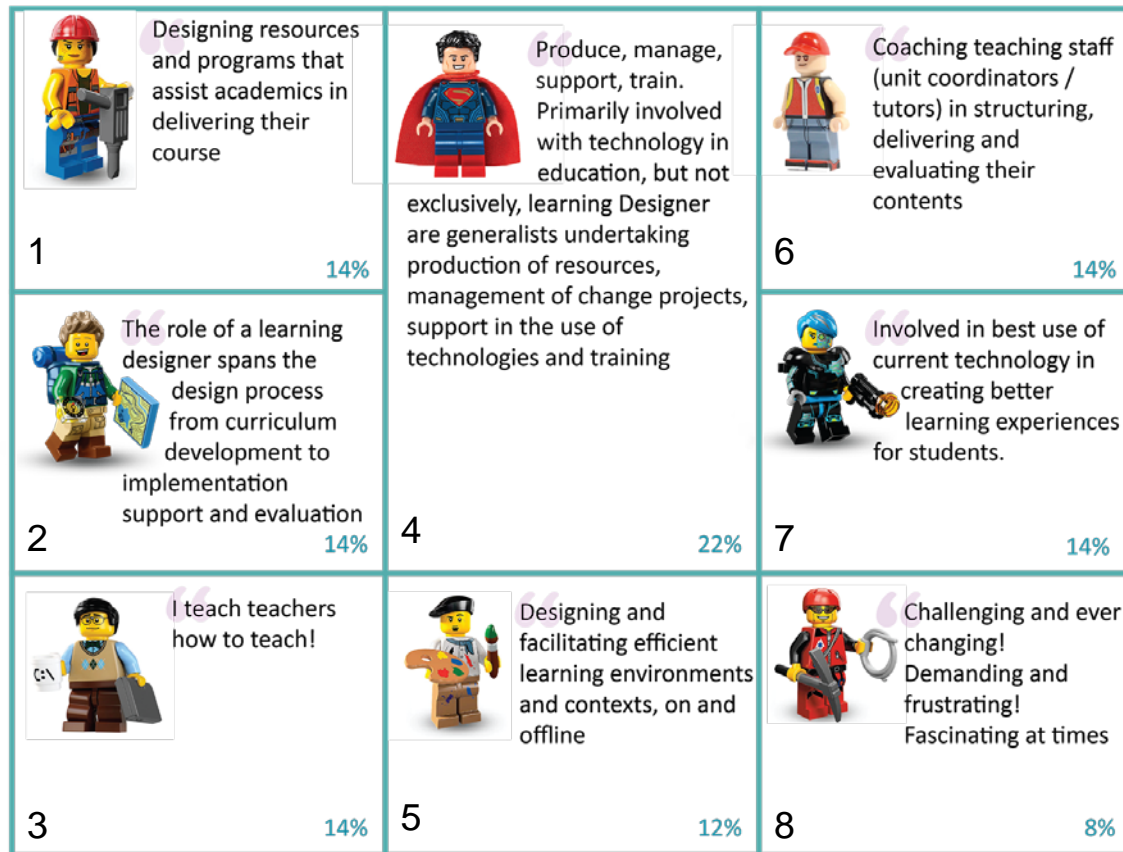
■ Daily, ■ Weekly or ■ Monthly



● Each learning designer's response was unique to how frequently they do these activities.

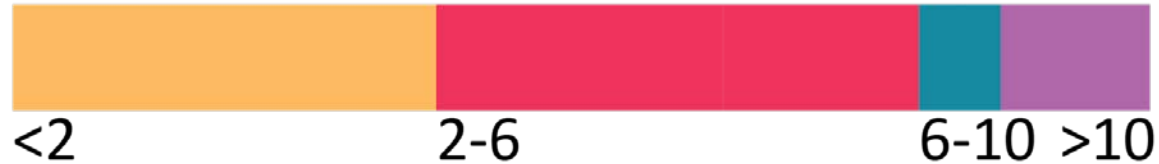
● 24% of respondents do all of these activities at least once a year.

Who were /are you trying to recruit as learning designers?



How long?

Years in current role



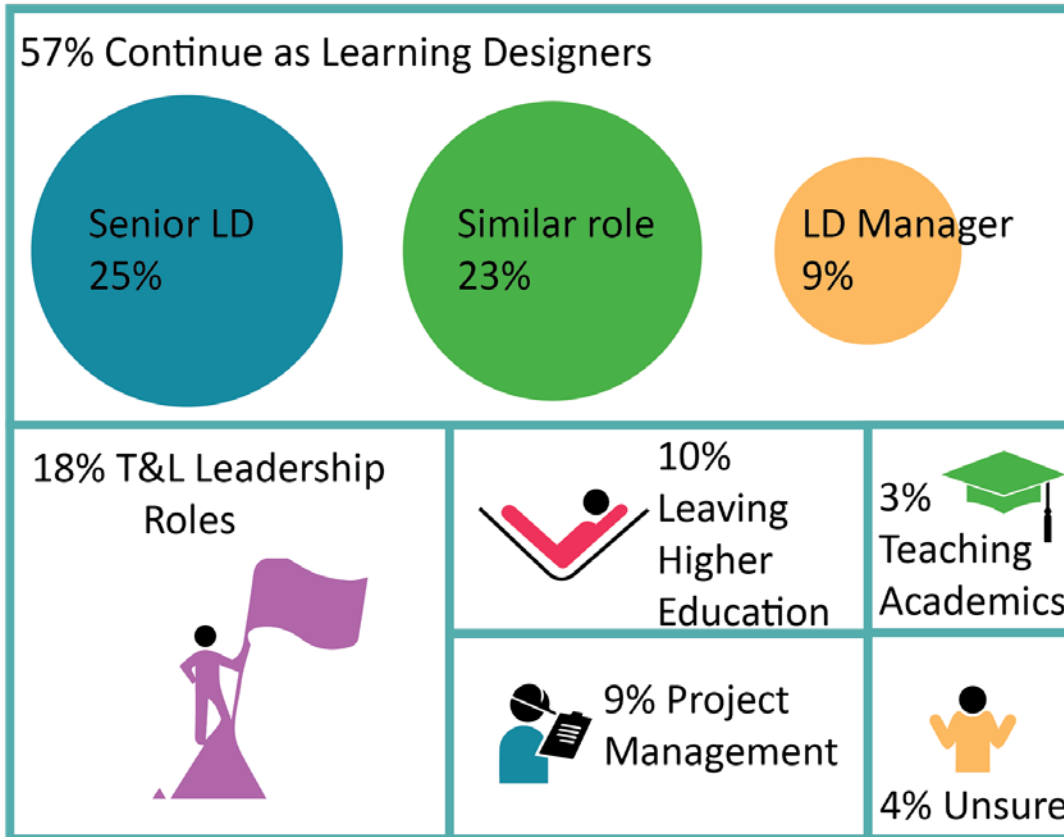
Years as Learning Designer



Implications

- What future roles do you think LDs can progress towards?

In 5 years time learning designers want to be:



Further Implications

- Do these roles currently exist?
- What professional development might LDs need to progress?

Project Dissemination

Australian ePortfolio Forum (2017) poster

LD communities

- South-East Queensland x-institutional Learning Design Forum (June 2017)
- UQ Learning Design Community (Multiple visits 2017)
- ASCILITE TELevisors Special Interest Group (June 2017)

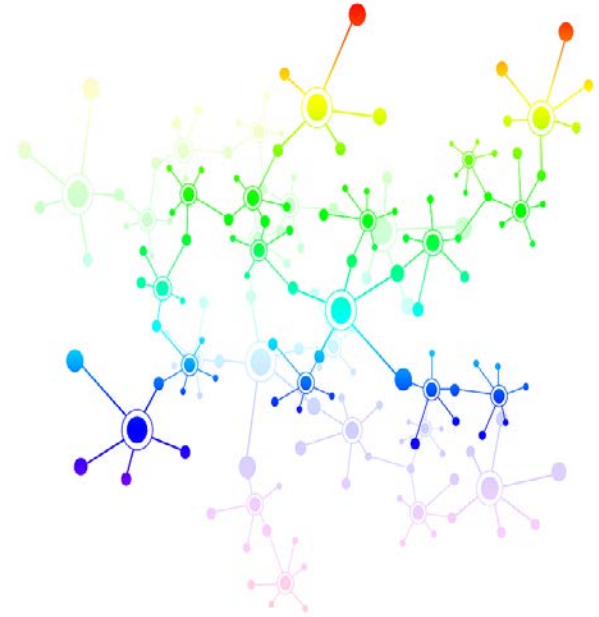
HEA Annual Conference UK (July 2018)

AAEEBL Conference Vancouver (July 2018)

<http://itali.uq.edu.au/content/ld-project>

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- The Council of Australian Directors of Academic Development's 2016 project funding.
- The directors and learning designers who responded to the surveys.
- Our Reference Group - Dr Kylie Readman and Dr Gillian Hallam
- Research Assistant – Dr Jeff Parker



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