Evaluation of the Edge 2019 programme

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1 Executive Summary

Teesside EDGE Programme
The Teesside EDGE programme was designed specifically as an in-depth development programme for a cross-disciplinary group of hand-picked University academics to explore new ways of thinking and work collaboratively to develop leadership skills, manage change and apply entrepreneurial ways of thinking into practice. Taking place over 6 focused sessions, the programme was facilitated by Chris Baker, an external expert in entrepreneurial leadership, who has run similar programmes nationally.

EDGE Session feedback
Feedback from the six individual sessions that ran throughout the year indicates that all respondents were wholly satisfied with each session and would recommend the sessions to others. Satisfaction with aspects of the EDGE programme was generally high with only one area scoring less than 90%: the suitability of the venue. This essentially concerned the two residential venues at the beginning and end of the programme. Residential 1 also saw the lowest satisfaction with the '*materials received prior to the session*' indicator, with some respondents suggesting they didn't receive enough detail or information prior to the course.

Recommendations:
- Review the venue for the residentials at the beginning and end of the programme.
- Refresh the pre-programme overview to incorporate more information on the purpose, content and structure of the programme.
- Consider making more information available to the attendees prior to the programme, where appropriate.

EDGE Change Projects
Throughout the programme, participants were encouraged to use the sessions to explore and develop proposals for a change project as a practical application of the learning and knowledge acquired during the programme. Each EDGE member was also matched with a mentor from the Teesside University Board of Governors to provide guidance and support in developing the change proposal. One cross-University collaboration has emerged, whilst several projects will be piloted in specific Schools with the potential opportunity to further extend across the University in the future.

All EDGE participants have made significant progress in the development of their change proposals and have particularly valued the involvement and encouragement of the Governor mentors. All the mentors have fully engaged with the EDGE participants and projects. Many of the Governor mentors are continuing to offer ongoing support and, in several cases, offering their contacts and networks in support of the projects.

Recommendations:
- Continue the involvement of Governors as change project mentors for the 2019/20 programme.

EDGE Participant Experience

The 10 participants on the Teesside EDGE programme have taken part in exploratory interviews to assess their experience and explore any immediate impacts.

Participants deeply valued the ethos behind the programme and appreciated the opportunity to explore both Teesside University and the wider HE sector in more detail. Several participants expressed a sense of pride at being selected to attend the programme along with a feeling of being recognised and valued by the University. This was further embedded with the involvement of Governor mentors and of the Chair of the Board of Governors, Alastair MacColl, during one of the sessions where the opportunity to engage with the senior leadership team on University strategy was strongly welcomed by several participants and contributed to the group perceiving a sense of senior-level backing.

There was some variance apparent in participants' understanding of the programme's purpose initially, with several people questioning the reasons for their selection and commenting that the setting up phase also lacked clarity of the purpose. However, these attendees felt that it was through interactions and discussions with Laura Woods and Karen Race at the first residential, and with Chris Baker during the sessions, that the programme's purpose and expectations of the participants was better understood.

Recommendations: *Purpose & Expectations*
- Facilitate greater representation from UET at the start and end of the programme.
- Associate Deans (EBE) and/or DAE Director to discuss with nominated members of staff the reasons for their selection and the purpose and expectations of the EDGE programme and group.
- Review the pre-programme information and overview to ensure clarity of the purpose and intended outputs, and work with the facilitator to incorporate additional content developed during the programme on areas such as the wider HE context and civic university roles.
- Make appropriate documentation available via the participants' Teams site at the earliest possible stage.
- Create an internal SharePoint space to promote the staff development framework and EDGE programme across the University, populated with testimonials, change project summaries and impact case studies/updates to raise awareness of the programme internally and act as a tool to clarify the programme's purpose.

The programme was structured to start and end with a two-day residential, with monthly one-day sessions in between, and all participants agreed that this was the optimal configuration and that the residentials, particularly at the beginning, were crucial in developing the cohesiveness of the group. Satisfaction with the timing of the sessions was variable amongst the attendees: whilst most felt that the timing worked well, others highlighted some timetabling clashes.

The contribution of the cohort members from Academic Enterprise was repeatedly highlighted as a strength of the programme, providing academic members of staff with additional insights into alternative business-focused perspectives. Some participants have cautioned against increasing the numbers for subsequent cohorts to enable both sufficient time to complete activities, and also so that a cohesive group can be formed allowing for inclusion and participation from all members of the cohort.

The major highlight for all involved has been the establishment of a strongly cohesive group that is also operating as a support network for the participants outside of the EDGE, which was considered to be a result of the way in which the programme's ethos, structure and facilitator enabled the group to grow and develop. The opportunity to interact and meet with people with whom they had never previously been in contact was particularly appreciated, and they also recognised the extent to which they have learned from each other. For some, this has had a positive effect on their personal development.

The Teesside EDGE programme was facilitated by Chris Baker, an external expert in entrepreneurship leadership with extensive experience of running similar programmes nationally. All participants commented that Chris' knowledge and experience in the HE sector was clearly apparent during the programme.

> **Recommendations: *Model & Structure***
> - Continue the EDGE programme for 2019/20 using the now established and well-regarded model, duration and structure.
> - Consider the start and end residential dates in the context of the University key dates to avoid potential clashes, where possible.
> - Ensure that a mix of non-academic and academic backgrounds are represented in the cohort, including a nominated member of staff from DAE.
> - To maximise the opportunity for the cohort to develop into a cohesive group the cohort should be limited to a maximum of 12 – 15.
> - Continue to ensure that a comprehensive and wide-ranging speaker profile is built into the 2019/20 EDGE programme, including representation from the University Executive Team to recognise and endorse the programme for participants.

Concerns were recurrently raised regarding the demands on time and the commitments that participants have to make, particularly in between the sessions to carry out any work and to progress the change project. Whilst those in academic roles were allocated 50 hours via the University's workload model, dedicated to attending the day-long sessions, several participants did not feel that this was sufficient. There was also an issue with participants lacking the time that could be dedicated to follow-up activities between sessions. Having support from senior managers to commit to the follow-up activities and change project was considered critical in being able to dedicate time to the programme outside of the formal sessions.

> **Recommendations: *Time Demands***
> - Associate Deans (EBE) and/or DAE Director to investigate the possibility of formally allocating sufficient time in between programme sessions for participants to engage with the cohort and allow sufficient time for follow-up actions.
> - Associate Deans (EBE) and/or DAE Director to work with participants' line managers to ensure they are aware of the programme's demands and the time commitments required by participants to work on change initiatives.

The Teesside EDGE cohort has described a multitude of impacts already achieved through attendance on the programme, with many expecting that additional impacts will continue to

be brought out in the longer term. Some participants have already made use of the learning and resources in their teaching, with others referreing to the programme's impact on them personally, with particular emphasis on confidence-building and motivation.

A very clear consensus emerged amongst the EDGE cohort of a clear intent to continue as a community in some form, with some envisaging a longer-term ambition to grow the group exponentially to become a viable and distinctive resource for the University in developing innovative projects, and potentially acting as an 'Innovation Hub'. Continued involvement in the programme by becoming EDGE alumni mentors was also frequently raised by numerous participants.

Recommendations: *Continued Engagement*
- To further validate and embed the sense of backing from the University's senior management, ensure that the valued opportunity offered by the Governors for the EDGE cohort to be involved in the finalisation of the 2025 strategy is carried through.
- Build on the goodwill generated in the first cohort by establishing an EDGE Alumni group to act as mentors for subsequent cohorts and a support mechanism for the group to continue as a community in some form.
- Support the members of the group in their intention to act as an 'Innovation Hub' and the longer-term vision of becoming a distinctive resource for the University in developing innovation projects.
- Undertake a longer-term impact evaluation of the EDGE programme exploring all areas of impact and incorporating an assessment of the return on investment.

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2 Introduction

a) Teesside EDGE Programme

The Teesside EDGE programme was designed specifically as an in-depth development programme for a small group of hand-picked University academics to explore new ways of thinking and work collaboratively to develop leadership skills, manage change and apply entrepreneurial ways of thinking into practice. The cohort size was 10 and included colleagues from all Schools and Academic Enterprise. Taking place over 6 focused sessions, the programme was facilitated by Chris Baker, an external expert in entrepreneurial leadership, who has run similar programmes nationally.

The programme aimed to support participants to:
- Share an understanding of how enterprise and entrepreneurship are relevant to innovation and change in the university sector;
- Explore ways in which learning, teaching and research can benefit from an entrepreneurial approach;
- Develop and apply entrepreneurial thinking and solutions to current challenges they face.
- Review the ways in which their own career development can benefit from becoming more enterprising.

The following sessions were scheduled:

Date	Overview
October 18	**Two Day Introductory Session** **What does it mean to be an entrepreneurial university?** • Welcome to participants • Aims of the programme • Introduction to the key concepts of enterprise, entrepreneurship and innovation. Why do they matter? • Identifying the challenges for Teesside as a university **How innovative is my department?** This will enable participants to look for and capture evidence of where they think their department is innovative in terms of learning, teaching and research.
November 18	**Session 2: How does being entrepreneurial impact on learning, teaching and research?** • Review of activity on innovation in their department. • Looking to the future. What are the main trends in learning, teaching and research that we need to consider and what is their likely impact on the university? • Design a course for the future. A practical exercise in applying some of the ideas discussed earlier in the session. • *Activity for session 3:* Self-review of their own profile as innovative and entrepreneurial individuals.

Date	Overview
December 18	**Session 3: Am I entrepreneurial and innovative?** • Review of profiles. • What do we mean by entrepreneurial leadership? • How can we change others and ourselves? • Introduction of Governor mentors and their role. • *Activity for session 4*: Identifying something we want to change.
February 19	**Session 4: What can I change and how?** • Our ideas for change. Sharing of initial proposals to get feedback. • Producing a plan for change. Practical steps. • Why change initiatives often fail. What can we learn from failure? • *Activity for session 5*: begin working on joint change projects
March 19	**Session 5: Who else can I learn from?** • What do we mean by stakeholders, who are they and why are they important? • What do stakeholders want from our university? • Where can I get support for my plans? • *Activity for session 6*: finalising their change proposals
April 19	**Two Day Final Session** **Do you think this will work?** • Making a pitch for change to the group and governors • Learning from feedback • Creating my own action plan • Reporting back on progress

Teesside EDGE Programme

a) Baseline questionnaire prior to the programme start to explore:
   o How the programme fits with current and aspirational roles; reasons for nomination;
   o Individual expectations of the programme; expected outcomes.

b) Quantitative analysis of participants' satisfaction with individual sessions (non-accredited workshop feedback)

c) Qualitative assessment of participants' experience of the programme, using the original baseline documentation for comparative purposes, via individual interviews exploring experiences, satisfaction, outcomes and impact of the programme.

d) Views and assessment of the programme by the external facilitator, Chris Baker, and the Governor mentors.

3 Teesside EDGE Programme

3.1 Pre-Programme Expectations

Prior to the Teesside EDGE programme beginning in October 2018 all delegates were asked to provide a brief outline of why they were participating in the programme and their expectations of the outcomes they hoped to achieve at the end of the programme.

Reasons for Participation
A baseline was received from 9 of the 10 participants, with the most frequent reason for participation in the programme referring to **improving performance or development** in their current role (n=5). Using the programme to **apply entrepreneurial thinking** and **resolve challenges** (both n=4) was also commonly identified, whilst the opportunity to network and **connect with like-minded colleagues** was identified as an important driver by 3 delegates.

Figure 1: Reasons for Participating on the 2018/19 Teesside EDGE Programme

Anticipated Outcomes
A varied list of expected outcomes and achievements were put forward, however two key themes have emerged:

1. Relationship with colleagues
Five of the 9 delegates hoped to develop a peer network and have improved connections with colleagues on the programme, whilst five also sought to develop the tools and skills to increase engagement or influence with colleagues within their School or department.

2. Self-development
A number of delegates also made references to elements of developing themselves, through both self-evaluation & personal development and in becoming more enterprising and entrepreneurial (both n=4).

Figure 2: Anticipated Outcomes of Participating on the 2018/19 Teesside EDGE Programme
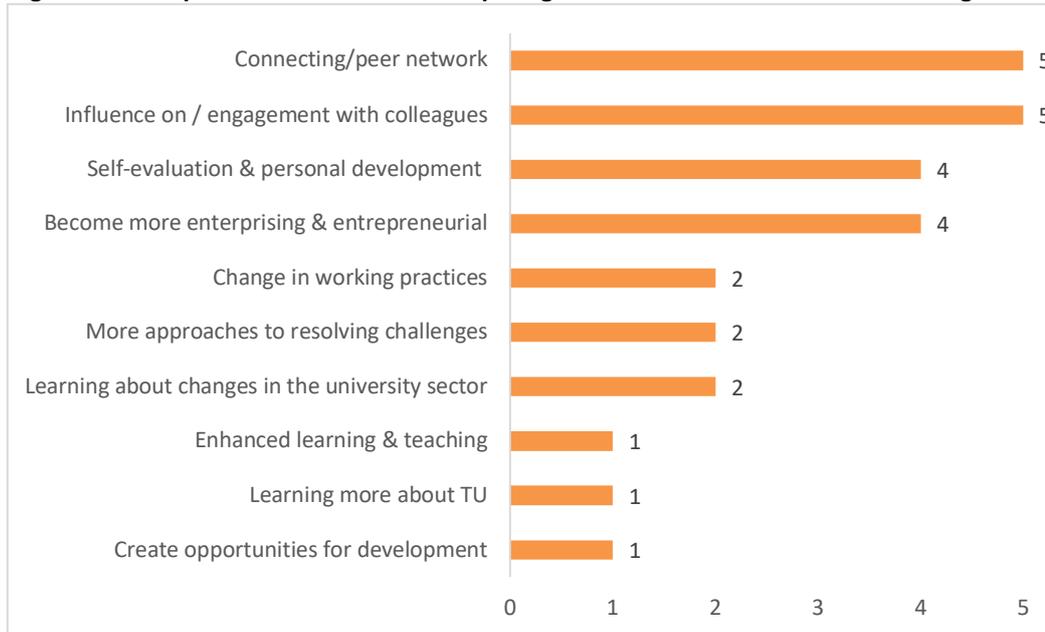
3.2 EDGE Session Feedback

The Teesside EDGE programme ran with 10 delegates from across the University attending six sessions, receiving a total of 53 completed feedback forms.

Overall Satisfaction
All respondents were wholly satisfied with each session that ran during the programme, with every module attracting responses that the participant's needs had been either exceeded or fully met.

Furthermore, all respondents indicated they would recommend the programme to others; no respondents indicated they would not recommend the programme.

Satisfaction with Aspects of the Sessions
Overall satisfaction with the EDGE programme was high with only one area scoring less than 90%: the suitability of the venue. This essentially concerned the two residential venues at the beginning and end of the programme, with respondents in session 1 commenting that the room they were in was dark and hot, and respondents from the final residential session commenting that the room was too cold:

"Learning room environment lighting poor and unventilated/ v hot."
"The room was dark and warm."

"The room was cold although heaters were provided"
"V friendly staff but the rooms were a bit cold on day one"

Table 1: Satisfaction with Aspects of the 2018/19 Teesside EDGE Sessions

Area	Question	%
Organisation	Materials received prior to session	92%
	Suitability of Venue	81%
	Residential 1 saw the lowest satisfaction with the materials received prior to the session indicator with two respondents suggesting they didn't receive enough detail or information prior to the course: *"It would have been useful to have more information about the programme beforehand."* *"A bit more of the structure and content of the programme in advance please."* *"Would have liked a little more information as to the content of the programme and purpose."*	
Content	Appropriate length	100%
	Appropriate content	98%
	Some respondents commented that they would have preferred more time to undertake activities: *"Would be good to have had more time for some activities."* *"Needed more time to write up change initiative."*	
Delivery	The course was well structured and delivered	100%
	The teaching/training methods used were appropriate	100%
	The content was delivered in a clear and understandable way	100%
	The teaching/training was interesting and stimulating	100%
	The course/workshop was inspiring and motivational	100%
	There was sufficient opportunity for discussion and exploration	100%
	The learning aims and outcomes were clearly outlined	98%
Materials	The materials were well written and presented	98%
	The materials were useful, relevant, and suitable for future reference	100%
Trainer	The teachers/trainers communication and presentation skills	100%
	The knowledge of the teacher/trainer	100%
	Wholly positive comments have been received for the session facilitator: *"Chris is clearly very knowledgeable with regards to the HE sector and his experience is evident."* *"Very clear delivery of the subject. Engaging session."* *"Thank you for creating a supportive and vibrant learning environment."*	

Benefits of the Sessions

When asked to reflect on the **most and least beneficial aspects** of the sessions as a whole, the most frequent responses referred to the particular content and focus of each individual session:

Module	Most Beneficial	Least Beneficial
Module 1	• *Clarifying Enterprise skills & innovation model which I can use to support staff in understanding how it fits for them* • *Critical exploration of the Entrepreneurial University* • *Group discussions and bonding. Learning about the wider university* • *Networking, finding out other participants roles responsibilities and resource time.* • *The opportunity to work on a project and the space to consider my role* • *Thinking about my vision statement, having time to step back to look at this*	• *All relevant, although the Entrepreneurial University scorecard could be reduced*
Module 2	• *Building up relationships with colleagues from different departments and sharing good practice. Sharing the innovative project in the morning but I enjoyed the whole day :)* • *Identifying the meaning of innovation* • *Networking, sharing ideas for innovative working*	
Module 4	• *Developing the project* • *Pitch practice* • *Supportive session to put plans into writing*	
Module 5	• *Both meeting with the chair of governors and Horizon Centre were beneficial* • *Information from governors perspective* • *Insight from governor*	

Module	Most Beneficial	Least Beneficial
	• *Meeting Alistair and considering who our stakeholders are* • *Stakeholder discussion* • *Talk from Alistair MacColl was very helpful - good insight into the governors. Stakeholder exercise also v beneficial useful to think about who to influence and how*	
Module 6	• *Discussion and TU strategy* • *Really useful to consider the culture of our organisations and to hear from Laura re University Strategy*	• *Room was cold* • *The wider context as I feel I'm aware of much of it already*

Recommendations:
- Review the venue for the residentials at the beginning and end of the programme.
- Refresh the pre-programme overview to incorporate more information on the purpose, content and structure of the programme.
- Consider making more information available to the attendees prior to the programme, where suitable.

3.3 Change Projects

Throughout the programme, participants were encouraged to use the sessions to explore and develop proposals for a change project as a practical application of the learning and knowledge acquired during the programme. Each EDGE member has also been matched with a mentor from the Teesside University Board of Governors to provide guidance and support in developing the change proposal.

One cross-University collaboration has emerged, whilst several projects will be piloted in specific Schools with the potential opportunity to further extend across the University in the future.

Name	School/Dept.	Project Description
Darren Abbott	SCDT	Development of AR digital teaching tool for student iPads, currently being piloted in SOH and the potential to be rolled out across the University. **Governor Mentor:** Alastair MacColl
Claire Fletcher	SCDT	Scoping exercise and proposal for a School mentorship project to encourage greater involvement in EBE. **Governor Mentor:** James Cross
Daisy Best & Rachel Morris, with support by David Dixon	SSSHL & SoH (DC)	Organisation of a hackathon "Opening Doors for Care Leavers" to develop innovative disruptive ideas to support care leavers and encourage participation in HE. **Governor Mentor:** Ada Burns
David Dixon	DC	Matching employer needs with academic expertise & availability. Developing a query to bring together information stored in existing databases to provide instant live information for clients. **Governor Mentor:** Dermot Russell
Shirley Marshall	SSED	Development of a commercial conduit for staff and students to develop enterprise skills for commercialisation, currently focused on the National Horizons Centre. **Governor Mentor:** Steve Tonks
Eimer Bourke	DAE	Bridging the gap between employer demands and curriculum planning and review: 1. Working with Academic Registry on incorporating employer perspectives and needs in the curriculum review process; 2. Encouraging greater input from employer advisory boards into the curriculum. **Governor Mentor:** Alastair MacColl
Lynne Hugill	SSED	Development of a fashion studio to work as a small business unit; providing commercial work experience for students and offering training opportunities externally.

Name	School/Dept.	Project Description
		Governor Mentor: Steve Tonks
Lesley Smitheringale	TBS	Development of a new repository for staff to access key documents, information, student/module reports, resources and guidance alongside an interactive calendar. The intention is to save staff time by having relevant information in one place. **Governor Mentor:** Dermot Russell
Jayne Cornforth	SoH	Development of an Enterprise & Entrepreneurship Proficiency self-assessment matrix for identifying areas for development actions in PDPRs. **Governor Mentor:** James Cross

All EDGE participants have made significant progress in the development of the change proposals and have particularly valued the involvement and encouragement of the Governor mentors. All the mentors have **fully engaged** with the EDGE participants and projects:

"He asked me to pitch it for us and was really positive about it. We talked about the impact it could have on staff morale, he really spurred me on and gave me confidence."

"She really understood it and backs it, to the point where she is chasing us to do things, she's really keen. Sat and listened with no arrogance, no ego and said "what can I do to help"

"I felt he genuinely wanted to talk to me and was interested, didn't feel rushed and he was supportive of the programme. I felt challenged, understood and we'll have future contact."

Many of the Governor mentors are continuing to offer ongoing support and, in several cases, offering their **contacts and networks** in support of the projects:

"We asked for introductions and she has connected us with all the safeguarding leads in the Tees Valley, also with the skills team at TVCA."

Furthermore, several Governors have **continued** involvement with the participants beyond the initial project mentoring exercise:

"He's been great and has even come into two of my sessions on my finance module to talk to students and had a great input where students could use live figures to work with. We plan to continue with this input. He was also really enthusiastic and proactive, emailing me to ask about progress."

The **concept** of Governor mentors was praised with several participants commenting on the link with learning to influence and make changes by connecting with stakeholders:

"This is all engineered by Chris when he got us in touch with the Governors, which worked well with really good matches. Seemed to match us up with the right Governor mentor. This tied in with the discussions over how important it is to get stakeholders involved in influencing and supporting any change initiatives."

Recommendations:
- Continue the involvement of Governors as change project mentors for the 2019/20 programme.

3.4 Participant Experience

The 10 participants on the Teesside EDGE programme have taken part in exploratory impact interviews to assess their experience on the programme and explore any immediate impacts.

The Teesside EDGE Ethos

Approval of the general ethos behind the development and launch of the programme was frequently commented on during discussions with the participants, with a particular emphasis on appreciating the opportunity to **explore the University in detail** for example:

"Teesside EDGE was fab, fantastic. Exactly what it said it was going to be. It made me think about change differently, in a better way. It put the University culture, and that of other HEIs in context. We all work so narrowly focused on doing our job and being on the programme gave us the time and space to look outside at the wider world and lift our heads up. This helped us identify where we fit and how we are put together and where we are heading."

"The University needs to do more of this, it helps team-building, and helps build collaborations, helps Schools and departments. There's a lot of changes happening at the University and it provided a safe environment for processing it."

All participants have also specifically highlighted how much they have valued the opportunity to put both the **HE sector** and Teesside University into **context**, with comments referring to how the programme helped them to piece together their place within the larger educational landscape and the transformations that the sector has experienced:

"The programme was a good mechanism for exploring and learning about constraints and challenges in HE but also about the opportunities."

"This is important because in your job it's so easy to be blinkered and focused on the job that you can't get to see the bigger picture. You have no space in your head to take a look out at the bigger picture across the whole of the HE sector. I loved having that opportunity. I already was aware of some background but it reinforced that we need to be accountable and we definitely found that rewarding."

The programme has also helped some participants to crystallize what **entrepreneurialism and enterprise** are all about, and to directly recognise the associated behaviour and actions in themselves:

"I went to understand what being entrepreneurial meant, and actually I realised that I am entrepreneurial."

"It helps in altering your mind set, realising that actually we are enterprising and entrepreneurial."

Recognition

Many of the participants have expressed feeling proud at being handpicked by senior management to attend the EDGE programme and feeling **recognition and value** from the University:

"I felt very privileged to be on the programme. It's always great when an employer wants to invest in you and I felt really positive about being selected. It was great for my personal and career development."

"We were treated as if we mattered and that our views and thoughts mattered. We got the feeling that we could change things and that we would be taken seriously. EDGE gave us the opportunity to meet senior management, get our voices heard and get the feeling that you will be listened to."

"We didn't know what we were letting ourselves in for really, it gave us the opportunity to bounce around lots of ideas and it ignited a fire. I certainly felt valued."

Support from the University's Senior Leadership Team

Similarly, programme participants have responded well to the support and backing received by the senior leadership team at the University and the Governors, as well as that of DAE.

Whilst the mentorship provided by the **Governors** was particularly appreciated, some participants have also commented on the value of having the Chair of the Board of Governors, Alastair MacColl, talk during one of the sessions and **provide additional context**:

"I really enjoyed having Alastair McColl come and speak to us, he was honest, open and it all helped to add context on TU strategic direction. Gave us information from a different viewpoint and it was good to hear it."

"He talked about what membership of the Board of Governors meant and what its relationship is with the role of the Chief Executive position. It was also good to hear him say something that was in direct opposition to what we had been told during the programme, and gave us some reassurance that even at senior level there is difference in interpretation

and confidence in ourselves that there is not always a right and wrong answer. We now have more confidence to get involved."

During the session Alastair MacColl also suggested there was the opportunity for the EDGE cohort to **engage and feed into** the development of the upcoming Teesside University 2020 to 2025 **institutional strategy**, which was strongly welcomed by several participants and contributed to the group perceiving a sense of senior-level backing:

"When the Chair of the Governors came to speak we were offered the opportunity as the EDGE group to influence the 2025 strategy and this is fantastic and needs to happen."

Through the involvement of the Governors, several participants have also been able to **access** other members of the University's **Senior Leadership Team**, such as Malcolm Page and Jo Heaton-Marriott, to request for support and/or financial backing in the development of their projects:

"He was really helpful when we met and talked about the change project I had in mind and provided a good opportunity to reach senior management with it. He really liked it and linked me up with Malcolm Page to discuss funding the project in its first year potentially."

"He got me in front of Malcolm Page the next week to show him my idea. It's opened a lot of doors….gave me a platform."

The periodic involvement of the **DAE Directorate** in attending the residentials, Laura Woods & Karen Race, was valued for the way in which they helped to set the scene at the beginning and also supported the various change projects through advice and meetings outside of the formal programme structure:

"The residentials were great, it was really good having people like Laura and Karen there. We could see that it was important, felt like were getting recognition."

"Laura was great, we felt we were backed up, at the last session I got a lot out of it and felt that we were given a lot of useful information and we were made to feel involved. Alastair MacColl made the original 2025 statement and then Laura repeated this and backed it up so I really feel like this should and will happen."

"Having talked with Laura we are using this as a pilot for testing the idea of micro businesses for students in the university that can also inform teaching & learning, Laura is helping us to looking at potential grant funding."

Several programme participants have commented that they would have appreciated greater **input from UET during the programme**, and expressed that representation from the group to talk at one of the programme sessions would have endorsed the value of being on the programme:

"We understand that finding the time in diaries is difficult, but it would have been nice to even have a 30 second video message or something just to endorse the programme and express recognition and acknowledging the programme."

The Purpose of Teesside EDGE

Participants were asked for their view on the initial phase of setting up the programme and receiving nominations for attendance, with several interviewees admitting to having **reservations**, although all confirmed that any doubts were subsequently overcome**:**

"I felt a little bit daunted for a while, as I had less experience of HE and being an academic than others. I'd be happy to talk to anyone in this position next time and help them to realise it is ok to take the pressure off yourself and that it will be ok."

"I didn't really know what to expect at the start, just another one of those things that we get told to go on."

Several of the participants on the programme attended due to their appointment in the **Principal Lecturer (EBE) role** and specifically welcomed the developmental opportunity in this area and to establish links with the other PLs:

"I went on it because as PL (EBE) I thought it was a good opportunity to get to grips with EBE-related work which I felt I needed. I also wanted to spend more time with the other PLs as I felt a bit lost in the role."

"I think it is absolutely crucial to support staff in a leadership role or aspiring to be in that role. I have been on other development programmes in my previous roles that have been brilliant and when I moved into this role as PL (EBE) I felt the lack of a similar programme. I had previously reached out to the other PLs in the absence of this to try to create a group of support with each other."

Whilst those in the PL (EBE) role could understand, and even in some cases specifically requested their inclusion, other participants not in this particular role **questioned the reasons** for their **selection** on the programme and would have welcomed some insight into their nomination alongside the attendees in the PL (EBE) roles:

"I was originally sat there thinking what am I doing here with these PLs? Are we as a group seen as future leaders?"

This was also manifest in several comments that there is a need to be **aware of the different roles, levels and contracts involved**, that previous interactions could affect participation on the programme, and that they have varying levels of experience in this area:

"Perhaps a need to be mindful of the role that people are in, there are people not at the same level as others, and this should be factored into expectations of the change projects that people can do and how much influence they realistically have."

"There was the assumption that everyone is the same. Perhaps some reflection on that at the start and how we all fit?"

There was a broad consensus that the setting up phase also **lacked clarity of the purpose** behind the Teesside EDGE. This was considered both in the pre-programme information that was provided and during the early sessions:

"Need initial information to get more context and an overview of it all. It wasn't really sold to me."

Several people referred to spending time during the early sessions **questioning the programme's purpose**:

"Need to get the balance right between being too open and woolly and too narrowly focused. If the scene had been set at the beginning and it was honestly said to us that this was an iterative process with a broad framework perhaps we wouldn't have spent so much time questioning."

"Need to clarify in the first session, is it about career growth, an innovation development programme, or a mix of both? Despite some lack of clarity the group decided to go ahead and make it our own. Once we were at peace with the open-ended nature we then flew. Overall it was a brilliant experience."

These attendees felt that it was through **interactions and discussions** with Laura Woods and Karen Race at the first residential, and with Chris Baker during the sessions, that the programme's purpose and the expectations of the participants was better understood:

"Having Laura Woods & Karen Race come along at the start helped to answer many questions about why we were all on the programme and what it was about, Laura explained how the aim was to build a community and that they wanted us to become change agents"

"I didn't know really what it was about, and some others were also wondering. Chris Baker helped to give us clarity probably as people were questioning."

Some concern was also expressed regarding the **expectations** of the programme in that the participants were required to come up with a **change project**:

"The only thing was that Chris didn't allude to the programme having to have an output at the end… Within the first session or two I was worried as some people had come up with ideas for their change project and I hadn't got one yet, but knew that the programme must be expensive so I was required to have an output."

> **Recommendations:** *Purpose & Expectations*
> - Facilitate greater representation from UET at the start and end of the programme
> - Associate Deans (EBE) and/or DAE Director to discuss with nominated members of staff the reasons for their selection and the purpose and expectations of the EDGE programme and group.
> - Review the pre-programme information and overview to ensure clarity of the purpose and intended outputs, and work with the facilitator to incorporate additional content developed during the programme on areas such as the wider HE context and civic university roles.
> - Make appropriate documentation available via the participants' Teams site at the earliest possible stage.
> - Create an internal SharePoint space to promote the staff development framework and EDGE programme across the University, populated with testimonials, change project summaries and impact case studies/updates to raise awareness of the programme internally and act as a tool to clarify the programme's purpose.

The Organisation & Structure of Teesside EDGE

Whilst generally the **set-up and organisation** of the EDGE programme were viewed positively, some comments referred to making pre-course contextual information available, and on considering making greater use of interactive technology and improving the structure of the Microsoft Teams site that was created:

"Perhaps a small pack of pre-reading (HE contextual) to get everyone up to speed before the programme may help to read in advance for information and background knowledge."

"You could possibly look at the method of capturing information better – felt it was based on post its and flipcharts and may be worth talking to the group about their preference and looking at more interactive technology. Chris also wasn't a member of the Teams site so he relied on other people to upload documents and it was sometimes difficult to find things so a bit more thought into the organisation would be useful."

The programme was structured to start and end with a two day residential with monthly one day sessions in between, and all participants agreed that this was the **optimal configuration**, for example:

"The mechanics worked well, it was just the right number of sessions and time, overnights were good, days about right."

Many attendees considered the **residentials**, particularly at the beginning, as being crucial:

"Residential one set the tone, it allows us to find out about each other."

"The residentials were key. Not only in the working sessions but the opportunity to spend time together socially and get to know each other. This led to the sessions being a safe place where we felt that we could share things confidentially, make mistakes and be ourselves."

However, as found in the individual session feedback, neither of the residential venues were considered ideal, with several participants recommending a change of venue for the 2019/20 programme.

Appreciation of the time and space offered by the programme was a recurrent theme in the interviews and was considered a key consequence of the decision to hold the individual day sessions off the main campus in Middlesbrough and instead at the Centre for Professional Development in Darlington:

"It was fantastic being off campus and having the head space and time that we needed. The change of scene is vital.

Really appreciated the time, having one full day away from work. I think some found it difficult, especially at the start, but as they went on it became better and people were more strict about not answering emails etc whilst there."

"It was great to have the time and space to reflect. It's good to be off campus too and somewhere different. It gives you a chance to lift your head up and reflect."

This also had the effect of **encouraging socialisation** between the participants, which helped the group to bond:

"It worked being away from campus in CPED so we couldn't pop back to the office to check emails etc, we all had lunch together and became a proper group. This was unexpected, we were linking with each other"

"It was good to get off-campus which helped the cohesiveness."

Satisfaction with the **timing** of the sessions was variable amongst the attendees; whilst most felt that the timing worked well, others highlighted some timetabling clashes:

"Having one full day out is a good thing. It means you have to commit and it was very rare for people to miss days."

"The timing wasn't always fantastic, depends on the profiles of attendees, their teaching workload etc. But the timetable of the programme should fit in with looking at the University timetables for the year ahead as much as possible. It may also be useful for an earlier September start if possible before the term starts, as this is such a busy time."

"I did find that the final two day residential clashed with the final week of my final year students' work so that was a big conflict with my teaching schedule. Wednesdays were also the only time we could have for department team meetings which I had to miss also."

The Teesside EDGE Facilitator

The Teesside EDGE programme was facilitated by Chris Baker, an external expert in entrepreneurship leadership with extensive experience of running similar programmes nationally.

During discussions on the programme all participants immediately commented on the extent to which Chris' **knowledge and experience** in the HE sector was clearly apparent during the programme:

"Chris has great knowledge of the HE sector, I'm highly respectful of his knowledge and expertise"

The qualities displayed during Chris' facilitation of the sessions were frequently described as demonstrating **flexibility**, promoting **trust & rapport**, and providing **inspiration & motivation:**

"Chris was great, built rapport and has got a good way about him. There were lots of big characters there and he made sure to mix us up so we all worked with everybody else. He wasn't frightened to challenge us or be challenged himself."

"I really rate him, he allows us to see both sides. He keeps things confidential so I trust him with sensitive information."

"He knew where we were coming from and was good at chivvying us along when needed. He knows how to connect, how to be a catalyst and make us catalysts."

"Also had some level of flexibility and adapted sessions whilst ensuring we met the objectives. He was always conscious of the energy within the room."

The cohort was also appreciative of the one to one sessions that were provided by Chris, who made himself available outside of the structured sessions to talk through any issues or support development of the change projects, as needed by the participants.

The Teesside EDGE Cohort

The **mix of people** on the EDGE cohort was a frequent theme in discussions with participants, with many people commenting on the value of academic/non-academic backgrounds and also of having cross-University members:

"The mix was good, it was good to see things from different perspectives. I learned something from every single person in that room at some level."

"The mix of people was a real benefit, good to find out how they think about things and they have challenged my thinking. It was a good fit. It was good to have people from different Schools and find out how they do things, it gives you confidence to suggest solutions or trying a new approach as it has worked elsewhere."

The contribution of the cohort **members from Academic Enterprise** was repeatedly highlighted as a strength of the programme, which provided the academic members of staff with additional insight into alternative business-focused perspectives.

Some participants have cautioned against increasing the **numbers for subsequent cohorts** to enable both sufficient time to complete activities and also so that a cohesive group can be formed allowing for inclusion and participation from all members of the cohort:

"The next programme should keep the numbers small. About 10 is just right, we became collegiate and developed trust which wouldn't happen if there was a bigger group."

Recommendations: *Model & Structure*
- Continue the EDGE programme for 2019/20 using the now established and well-regarded model, duration and structure.
- Consider the start and end residential dates in the context of the University key dates to avoid potential clashes, where possible.
- Ensure a mix of non-academic and academic backgrounds are represented in the cohort, including a nominated member of staff from DAE.
- To maximise the opportunity for the cohort to develop into a cohesive group the cohort should be limited to a maximum of 12 – 15.
- Continue to ensure a comprehensive and wide-ranging speaker profile is built into the 2019/20 EDGE programme, including representation from the University Executive Team to recognise and endorse the programme for participants.

The Teesside EDGE Group

In discussions with the EDGE participants there is an overwhelming consensus that the major highlight for all involved has been the establishment of a **strongly cohesive group** that is also operating as a support network for the participants outside of the EDGE programme:

"We bonded, rallied round when people were struggling, came up with joint solutions, met outside of the programme. That was part of the magic for me."

"This group just worked. We became a cohesive group with an identity, supported each other and networked. It was brilliant."

"In this group people seem to really get along. We genuinely have had no blips."

Descriptions of the group that has emerged from the EDGE programme tend to focus on the group's characteristics including **trust, honesty and confidentiality**:

"The support is just fantastic and the trust we have in each other. We can bounce ideas off each other and trust everyone is being open, honest and confidential."

"Trust and rapport must be built as soon as possible, everyone must trust that this is the safe zone and things that are said can't be used against people."

Several people have identified that the **ethos, structure and facilitator** of the programme enabled the group to grow and develop:

"That came right from the start, the culture was set up right at the beginning. Chris embraced it and helped us build on that through allowing us as a group to share experiences, it just naturally evolved."

"The residentials helped us to bond as a group and now we are supporting each other."

"Chris set the tone for this on the first day, he created the atmosphere of trust and honesty, openness. He was very influential in getting the group culture and spirit we have."

The participants have also recognised the extent to which they have **learned from each other** and for some this has had a positive effect on their personal development:

"This programme did something for my self-confidence and a big part of that is down to the people on the programme. I learned a lot from everyone."

The opportunity to interact and meet with people who they had **never previously** been in contact with was particularly appreciated:

"It has enriched my life getting to know people, that I would otherwise have just walked straight past."

The Demands on Participants' Time of Teesside EDGE

Many comments were received, during the interviews, concerning the demands on time and the commitments that participants have to make, particularly in between the sessions to carry out any work and to progress the change project. Whilst those in academic roles were **allocated 50 hours** via the University's workload model, dedicated to attending the day-long sessions, several participants did not feel that this was sufficient:

"The 50 hours allocation was essential and appreciated, but I wanted to give it more but couldn't due to not having the time."

"It feels that the workload allocation model got in the way and we were still considered to be contactable, which got in the way. We had to learn to be strong and totally switch off."

Everyone interviewed also identified that the programme also required a substantial and unanticipated demand on their time **in between the sessions**, which was considered outside of the 50-hour workload allocation:

"Chris thought that we had more time in between formal sessions than we did so it needs to be factored in for next time; I think this needs to be formally addressed via the work loading model. He expected quite a bit from us, didn't grasp the demands and pressures we're all dealing with already. Perhaps this could be discussed beforehand so he is aware if we are given hours or not to work on."

Making time for **group catch-ups** was also considered important, with some participants feeling that this could be organised at the start of the programme

I'd like to maybe have had to put some time in at the start for group catch-ups in the same way. Just one hour per month. If the time is in diaries at the start in the same way as the full days that would help. We've buddied up a lot, met for coffee, which helps if you have set yourself mini targets to achieve in between workshops. It would be helpful to explore asking people to set that time aside at the beginning."

Some suggestions were provided for dealing with the time needed to work on the **follow-up actions** outside of the formal session, with several participants suggesting additional allocation of hours through the workload model mechanism or through the hours provided to undertake Research & Scholarly Activity:

"Support for an EDGE action day in between sessions to work on your actions, this could be addressed in PDPRs as part of the RSA 5 weeks if agreement was made that a set period could be dedicated to action days for the EDGE."

Having **support from senior managers** to commit to the follow-up activities and change project was considered critical in being able to dedicate time to the programme outside of the formal sessions:

"I managed to block out time in my diary to work on the change project in the library which was fantastic having that kind of support. You need commitment by managers to agree that time is needed and can be allocated to spend on the change initiative."

> **Recommendations:** *Time Demands*
> - Associate Deans (EBE) and/or DAE Director to investigate the possibility of formally allocating sufficient time in between programme sessions for participants to engage with the cohort and allow sufficient time for follow-up actions.
> - Associate Deans (EBE) and/or DAE Director to work with participants' line managers to ensure they are aware of the programme's demands and the time commitments required by participants to work on change initiatives.

The Impact of Teesside EDGE

The Teesside EDGE cohort has described a multitude of impacts already achieved through attendance on the programme, with many expecting that additional impacts will continue to be brought out in the longer-term.

Making use of the learning on the programme and **applying** it directly within the **School** was considered an immediate impact for several participants:

"I've found that I used what I learned more in the School in how to get more colleagues involved in EBE."

"It was great to compare different worlds, this gave me the leverage to come back to our jobs and say this is what has worked well in other Schools so why don't we try it?"

Whilst some interviewees felt that it was too early to identify any particular impact of the programme on teaching & learning, others commented on the **use of resources in teaching**, particularly in developing entrepreneurial learning and in incorporating the QAA framework on enterprise and entrepreneurship:

"I'm using a lot of the resources and incorporating them into my teaching next year, this has made me really excited to work with the students and support them in linking with entrepreneurial learning."

"It already has had an impact. I've used the QAA framework and been encouraged to use it to feed into the way I'm going to develop enterprise skills in science students. It has helped to learn about the differences between enterprise and entrepreneurship. This will all feed into how we approach use of the Enterprise Hub in the Stephenson building which will be a space for students to explore ideas, connect with like-minded people, and hold meetings."

Some of the cohort have referred to the programme's impact on them **personally**, with particular emphasis on confidence-building and motivation:

"For me, involvement in the programme has given me confidence, particularly in networking. Before I always thought that I wasn't very good at it but actually I am. The way I built relationships was a bit of a surprise."

"For me, the project I'm working on has been the most excited I've been in my job for years, I feel really fired up. It's what I went into my career to do and it's something that is really going to have an impact, I just can't stop smiling about it."

The impact on one individual's personal development has been so extensive that it has encouraged them to further **expand their existing business**, which should have longer-term impact on teaching and learning opportunities for their students:

"It was also an unanticipated consequence that inspired me to expand my own business, the programme gave me the confidence to do it. I've found some premises and will be seeing clients there part-time. I'll be able to bring this clinical experience into my teaching and learning and the students really appreciate that."

Beyond Teesside EDGE

The possibility of continuing involvement in the programme by becoming **EDGE alumni mentors** was frequently raised by numerous participants:

"We would like to help with EDGE 2, we shouldn't be two wholly separate groups. They need to make their own group but we can also overlap by being involved in some sessions, passing on our contact details for cohort 2 who should be encouraged to contact us. We need to ensure that we are given time to get together outside of the EDGE programme."

A very clear consensus emerged amongst the EDGE cohort of a clear **intent to continue** as a community in some form:

"The EDGE shouldn't be viewed just as a one year programme, it should continue on. Someone should have oversight of this to make sure it happens."

"I've got friendships out of it and would love this to continue beyond the presentations we're doing…there are amazing people in this group with creative brains and fascinating experiences"

Whilst the format and shape of how the group continues will be self-directed and evolve organically, the suggestion of the EDGE cohort acting as an **'Innovation Hub'** for the University was proposed by several participants:

"I'd like this cohort to work as an innovation team, let's invite innovative ideas from people, we can sift through them and be the safe zone for people to talk though them, then we can present the ideas to SLT."

The **long-term ambition**, envisaged by some of the EDGE participants, is to grow the group exponentially to become a **viable and distinctive resource** for the University in developing innovative projects:

"If this continues, in 5 years' time you could have a core group of 30 or 40 people across the university, having influence, particularly if they are taken seriously by the SLT – and this could flow both ways, the SLT could make good use of us too. This would lead to a pool of people leading substantial projects and making changes across the University."

Recommendations: *Continued Engagement*

1. To further validate and embed the sense of backing from the University's senior management, ensure that the valued opportunity offered by the Governors for the EDGE cohort to be involved in the finalisation of the 2025 strategy is carried through.
2. Build on the goodwill generated in the first cohort by establishing an EDGE Alumni group to act as mentors for subsequent cohorts and a support mechanism for the group to continue as a community in some form.
3. Support the members of the group in their intention to act as an 'Innovation Hub' and the longer-term vision of becoming a distinctive resource for the University in developing innovation projects.
4. Undertake a longer-term impact evaluation of the EDGE programme exploring all areas of impact and incorporating an assessment of the return on investment.