



Enterprise
Educators
UK

SUMMARY REPORT

THE REALITIES OF BEING AN ENTERPRISE EDUCATOR



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The Realities of Being An Enterprise Educator: A Summary Report

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We hope that our members and the wider enterprise and entrepreneurship sector find this report useful, and move forward with the recommendations within it to further enhance our work in the future.

Thank you all for your contributions.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dave Bolton', written in a cursive style.

Dave Bolton
President - Enterprise Educators UK

Executive Summary

This report delves into the evolving role of enterprise and entrepreneurship educators within the UK's higher education system. These educators, often operating under various job titles, are instrumental in fostering entrepreneurial outcomes among students. The report identifies a significant shift in the expectations and responsibilities of these educators over recent years, a phenomenon described as 'mission creep'. This shift reflects a broader institutional recognition of the importance of entrepreneurship as a critical third mission alongside teaching and research.

The report draws from surveys conducted in 2020 and 2023, and key findings are presented according to three questions posed within the introduction of this report.

In terms of the three questions posed within the introduction to this report, key headlines and highlights include:

Who are the current enterprise and entrepreneurship educators?

- 41% of survey respondents were over 50 years old. In comparison, 30% of survey respondents were under 40 years old.
- The majority (59%) of the survey respondents were female.
- 1 in 2 survey respondents were White British. However, there were 14 different ethnic groups/ethnicities represented amongst the 78 survey respondents in 2023.
- There are differences in the characteristics of enterprise and entrepreneurship educators by EEUK pathway – e.g. **Influencers** are younger than **Academics** and **Practitioners**, however **Influencers** and **Practitioners** are newer to the role.
- When grouped by EEUK pathway, the majority of respondents were **Academics** in both 2020 and 2023, but there was a marked increase in the number of **Influencer** respondents (due to an increase in the number of Enterprise Centre managers) from 2020 to 2023.

What is the current reality, or lifeworld, of enterprise and entrepreneurship educators?

- The primary focus of the majority of respondents, in both 2020 and 2023, was 'motivating and inspiring learners'.
- There was a marked increase in the percentage of respondents identifying 'building collaborative relationships with learners, educators and stakeholders' as their primary focus also increased between 2020 and 2023.
- **Academics**, **Influencers** and **Practitioners** are predominantly associated with the primary focus aligned to their pathway. However, the importance attached to the primary focus has weakened and spread to include those associated with other pathways.
- The most important competency for all enterprise and entrepreneurship educators in 2020 and 2023 was 'inspire learners in enterprise and entrepreneurship through own enthusiasm and knowledge'.

- From 2020 to 2023, there has been an increase in the importance of competencies related to stakeholder engagement, network and relationship development and institutional development and a decrease in the importance for those competencies related to teaching and learning.
- Therefore, enterprise and entrepreneurship educators have to be able to balance inspiring learners whilst engaging with stakeholders, networking and developing relationships with others, both internally and externally.
- The reality faced by enterprise and entrepreneurship educators in each pathway is changing with time.
- **Influencers** and **Practitioners** perceive a wider range of competencies as critical to their role than **Academics**.
- Survey respondents identified that in 2023, they were spending a greater amount of time on a smaller number of competencies in comparison to 2020.
- Survey respondents in each pathway identified competencies associated with their own pathway, but they are also drawing upon those from other pathways.

What do enterprise and entrepreneurship educators need to know and what skills do they need to be effective in their role?

- The majority of respondents identified that their own knowledge and skills requirements have changed over the last three years.
- Whilst enterprise and entrepreneurship educators engage with a range of different methods to support their own professional development, the majority use and find useful informal/social methods of learning.
- The majority of respondents perceived that the level of support from their institution to support professional development was good or excellent. However, there were differences by pathway – e.g. **Practitioners** were more likely to rate institutional support as good or excellent whilst **Academics** were more likely to rate institutional support as poor or satisfactory.

1. Introduction

The title 'enterprise or entrepreneurship educator' is typically self-(pro)claimed by those working to create entrepreneurial outcomes in others. More often than not recruited to more traditional university job-roles with more universally recognisable titles, such as Lecturer, Business Advisor or even Head of Enterprise, this broader mantle embraces the wide range of roles, responsibilities that underpin the UK's graduate start-up and enterprise education support structures.

Often working within Careers Departments, under the banner of Professional Services or within Academic Faculties, enterprise and entrepreneurship educators anecdotally seek support for a wide range of institutional, sector and regional challenges in order to deliver for their students.

... many educators are now in a position where they have responsibilities beyond that of curriculum and pedagogical development within their own department. They are charged with carrying entrepreneurial learning across all departments in the faculty and/or the institution as a whole ... success in this respect will depend on an educator's ability to build appropriately on the ethos and strategy of the organisation, identifying opportunities for change and developing a capacity to effectively realise these (Gibb, 2010, p. 156) [1]

As Gibb (2010: 156) identifies it seems that that this has been the reality of being an enterprise/entrepreneurship educator in a UK institution for over a decade, and yet the breadth and variety of these challenges is still not understood.

There is now a need to rely on more than anecdotal evidence to understand how this shift in role has impacted different groups of enterprise and entrepreneurship educators, what competencies and skills have become more or less important over the last few years and what have been the implications for the professional development of enterprise and entrepreneurship educators.

This report seeks to understand and map these challenges, exploring the reality of this 'mission creep' across enterprise-related roles and recommending how best to support the key actors in this educational-entrepreneurial ecosystem as they support the development of the next generation of graduate entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial staff.

2. Context

The shift to recognise a 'third' mission for universities, beyond the traditional HE outputs of research and teaching (the Dearing report 1997) created the need for effective institutional roles to support staff, students, and graduates to start businesses (Science Enterprise Challenge 1999; Pittaway et al., 2023 [2]), yet it did not describe the need, the role, or the challenge ahead. Enter the 'Enterprise Educator', defined as someone who works 'to develop and deliver effective enterprise and entrepreneurship education that adds value to the journey of the learner' (IOEE p. 22). This is used by Enterprise Educators UK (EEUK) as the umbrella term for all those working in support of entrepreneurial outcomes in learners.

The wide-ranging roles, responsibilities and attributes of an Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Educator were firstly described within QAA (2012 & 2018: 11) Guidance for Higher Education and additionally within the SFEDI and IOEE National Occupational Standards for Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Educators (2016). EEUK, as a sector-based, member-led organisation, recognises the breadth of role and requirements asked of its members and those working in the sector, identifying an enterprise and entrepreneurship educator as an approach, rather than a type, a passion, rather than job description and identified that they:

- Had developed expertise from a variety of academic and/or professional backgrounds that form their routes to appointment (through a wide range of professions, specialisms and/or academic subject/disciplines including Careers Service; Business start-up mentors and coaches; industry etc). Worked within a diverse and complex landscape (such as working across Education and Business; within communities and/or designated economic areas; in developing entrepreneurship ecosystems; with a wide range of diverse stakeholders; and/or to create culture change at institutional, regional, or national level.
- Drew upon a broad, and often bespoke, skill set to deliver enterprise and entrepreneurship education effectively.

EEUK recognises that educators may prefer to define themselves as being either an entrepreneurship and/or enterprise educator, acknowledging the specialisms inherent within the approaches needed to 'develop and deliver effective enterprise /entrepreneurship education' depending upon the output or outcome sought or recognised by the student. The difference in the time pressure or expectations for those starting a business are different to those recognising that start-up or freelancing maybe a future option for their portfolio career. The definition of 'effective' demands differing pedagogy, approaches and support.

EEUK, as a national membership organisation, recognised these diverging approaches, underpinned by a unifying ambition and in response to their varying backgrounds,

expertise and specialisms of its members, and created the EEUK Fellowship in support of the professionalisation of the variety of roles/responsibilities that enterprise and entrepreneurship educators undertake.

EEUK launched the EEUK Fellowship in 2018, creating the first sector-wide recognition of all activities within the banner of 'enterprise education' creating three pathways – **Academic**, **Influencer** and **Practitioner**. EEUK aligned its sector-wide Fellowship award to the National Occupational Standards for Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Educators but also recognised the breadth of backgrounds and experience of those working to support entrepreneurial outcomes in others.

These three pathways are recognised as having equal importance within the entrepreneurial-educational ecosystem and their primary function and possible related job description is outlined below (Table 1).

In 2020, EEUK undertook a survey of enterprise and entrepreneurship educators to explore these areas of 'need to know' and gain insights into their life world (116 responses). The outcomes from the survey highlighted the complexity of job roles. It was clear that enterprise educators were working outside traditional university job descriptions to deliver for their students, but also beyond any one of the three pathways they had identified as. This 2020 survey proved that many enterprise and entrepreneurship educators experienced the 'mission creep' identified anecdotally, and for many, this meant contributing to the institutional ambitions, regionally, nationally, and internationally, as well as delivering effectively within their stated bounds of extra or in-curricular.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the UK's exit from the European Union and changes in government policy related to higher education, the last three years have witnessed significant changes in the enterprise and entrepreneurship education landscape. To understand the impact of these changes on the characteristics of educators, the competencies and skills required to be effective in the role and the associated professional development needs, EEUK updated their 2020 survey and ran it for a second time in 2023 receiving 128 responses. It is within this report that we present the findings of both the 2020 and 2023 surveys.

So, what is the current reality, or lifeworld, of the enterprise and entrepreneurship educator? Does it vary by EEUK pathway? What knowledge and skills are required by enterprise and entrepreneurship educators to meet current expectations and navigate the near future? What are the implications for the professional development of enterprise and entrepreneurship educators?

This summary report explores these questions [3] over three sections:

- Who are the current enterprise and entrepreneurship educators?
- What is the current reality of enterprise and entrepreneurship educators?
- What knowledge and skills do enterprise and entrepreneurship educators need to be effective in their role?

3. Who are the current enterprise and entrepreneurship educators?

Not included as part of the 2020 survey, the 2023 survey provided an opportunity to explore the characteristics of the enterprise and entrepreneurship educators respondents at a personal and institutional level. This snapshot of the community gave an overview of the characteristics that may not only shape their experiences of being an enterprise and entrepreneurship educator but also expectations related to the role and the competencies required to add value in the role (QAA, 2018). [4]

Personal Characteristics

In terms of personal characteristics, results included:

- 60% of survey respondents have been involved with enterprise and entrepreneurship education for more than five years. In comparison, 10% have been involved for less than one year.
- 41% of survey respondents were over 50 years old. In comparison, 30% of survey respondents were under 40 years old.
- The majority (59%) of the survey respondents were female.
- 1 in 2 survey respondents were White British. However, there was evidence of diversity amongst the survey respondents with 14 different ethnic groups/ethnicities represented amongst the 78 survey respondents in 2023.

The findings from 2023 do reflect the outcomes from other surveys. For example, a survey undertaken by SFEDI and IOEE in 2014 highlighted that the majority of survey respondents were female, they were aged over 45 and they had been involved in enterprise and entrepreneurship education for more than five years. [5]

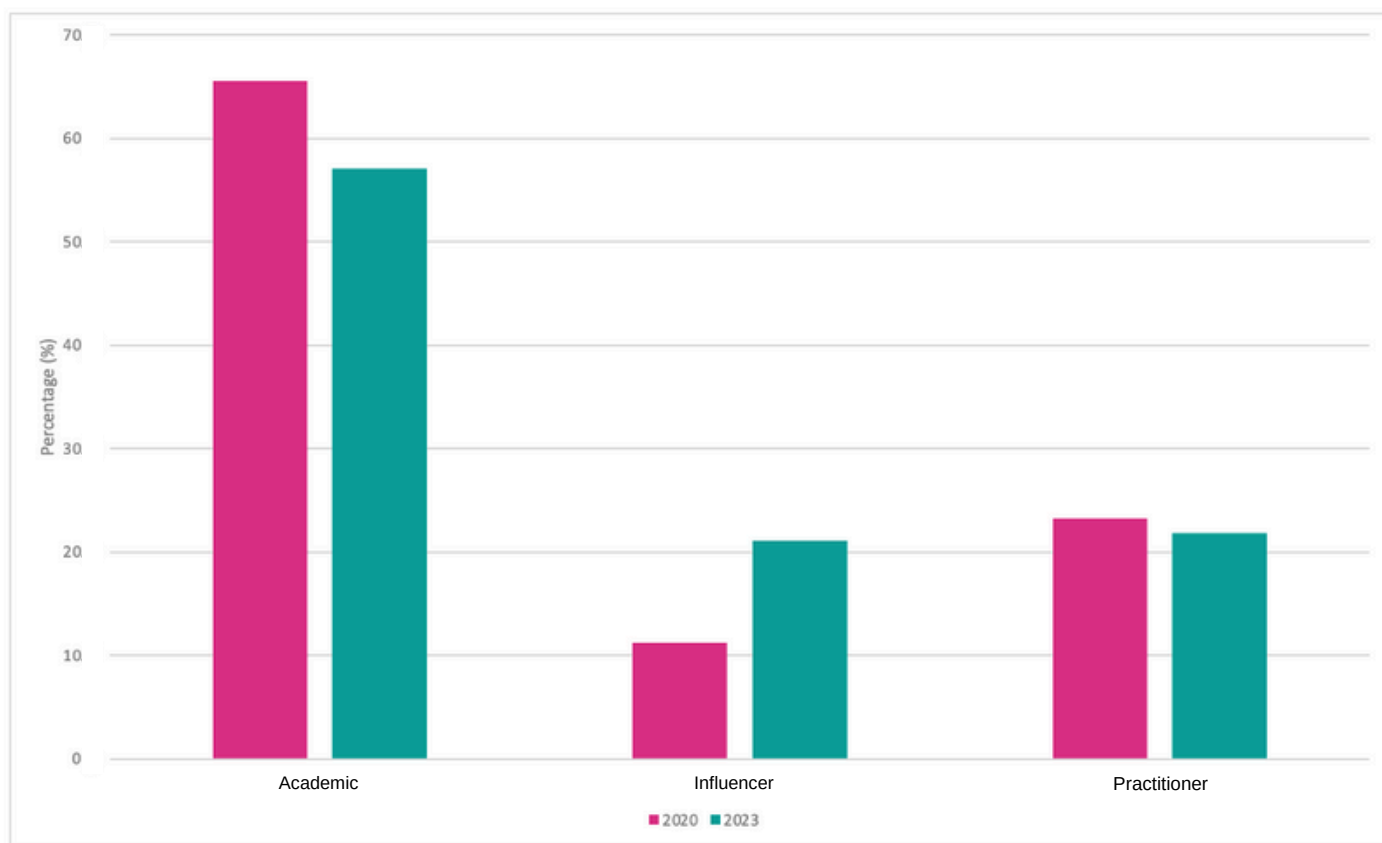
EEUK Pathway

Data related to the EEUK pathways was collected in both 2020 and 2023. If the survey respondents are grouped by EEUK pathway, [6] the majority were **Academics** in both 2020 and 2023 (65% and 57% respectively) and whilst the number of survey respondents who were **Practitioners** remained similar, there was an increase in the number of survey respondents who were **Influencers** (see Figure 1). In part, this reflects an increase in the number of Enterprise Centre managers responding to the survey.

Table 1: Overview of the EEUK Fellowship Pathways

Pathway	Primary Focus	Typical job role/title/responsibility
Academic	Planning and delivering effective enterprise /entrepreneurship curricula	Academic Teaching or Faculty Roles Lecturer Academic or faculty staff Teaching Assistant Educational / curriculum Developer Academic
Practitioner	Motivate and inspire learners in developing enterprising and entrepreneurial mindset, behaviours and skills	Extra curricula roles (delivering non-assessed inputs & activities) Careers Advisors Enactus University Advisor Technology Transfer Officers Entrepreneurs in Residence Placement Managers Start-up advisors Business Development Managers
Influencer	Build collaborative relationships with learners, educators and other stakeholders	Managing /securing entrepreneurial outcomes (through others) Enterprise Centre Management Careers Service Management Technology Transfer Managers Incubator managers Responsible for KTPs/projects

Figure 1: Survey respondents by EEUK pathway – A comparison of 2020 and 2023



There are differences in the personal characteristics of enterprise and entrepreneurship educators by EEUK pathway. Key differences include:

- Involvement with enterprise and entrepreneurship education - **Practitioners** were newer to enterprise and entrepreneurship education in comparison to **Academics** and **Influencers**. **Academics** were more likely to have been in the role for more than five years in comparison to **Influencers** and **Practitioners**. For example, 42% of **Academics** have been in the role for more than 10 years in comparison to 26% of **Influencers** and 21% of **Practitioners**.
- Age - **Influencers** were younger than **Academics** and **Practitioners**. For example, 52% of **Influencers** were under 40 years in comparison to 15% of educators and 40% of **Practitioners**. The age profile for **Academics** and **Practitioners** reflected the age distribution of all survey respondents.
- Gender - **Academics** were more likely to be male in comparison to **Influencers** and **Practitioners**, whilst **Influencers** were more likely to be female.
- Ethnicity - The profile of ethnic groupings within each pathway reflected the distribution of all survey respondents, although there was a greater diversity of ethnicities amongst **Academics** than **Influencers** and **Practitioners** (however this difference is not statistically significant).

Findings related to involvement and age suggest that enterprise and entrepreneurship educators within the three pathways are at different stages in their career development. This may shape the day-to-day reality they face as well as the knowledge and skills required to be effective in their role.

Institutional characteristics

The institutional characteristics of enterprise and entrepreneurship educators were explored in both 2020 and 2023. Key headlines and highlights included:

- The majority of survey respondents were from UK higher education institutions in 2020 and 2023. However, there were responses from enterprise and entrepreneurship educators in non-UK higher education institutions, FE colleges and private sector organisations (totalling 14.6% in 2020 and 9.8% in 2023). This reinforces the different contexts in which enterprise and entrepreneurship education is being delivered (Thomassen et al., 2019). [7]
- The majority of survey respondents were employed by three groupings of higher education institutions – Russell Group; pre-1992; and post-1992 – in 2020 and 2023 (see Appendix 3).

4. What is the reality, or lifeworld, of enterprise and entrepreneurship educators?

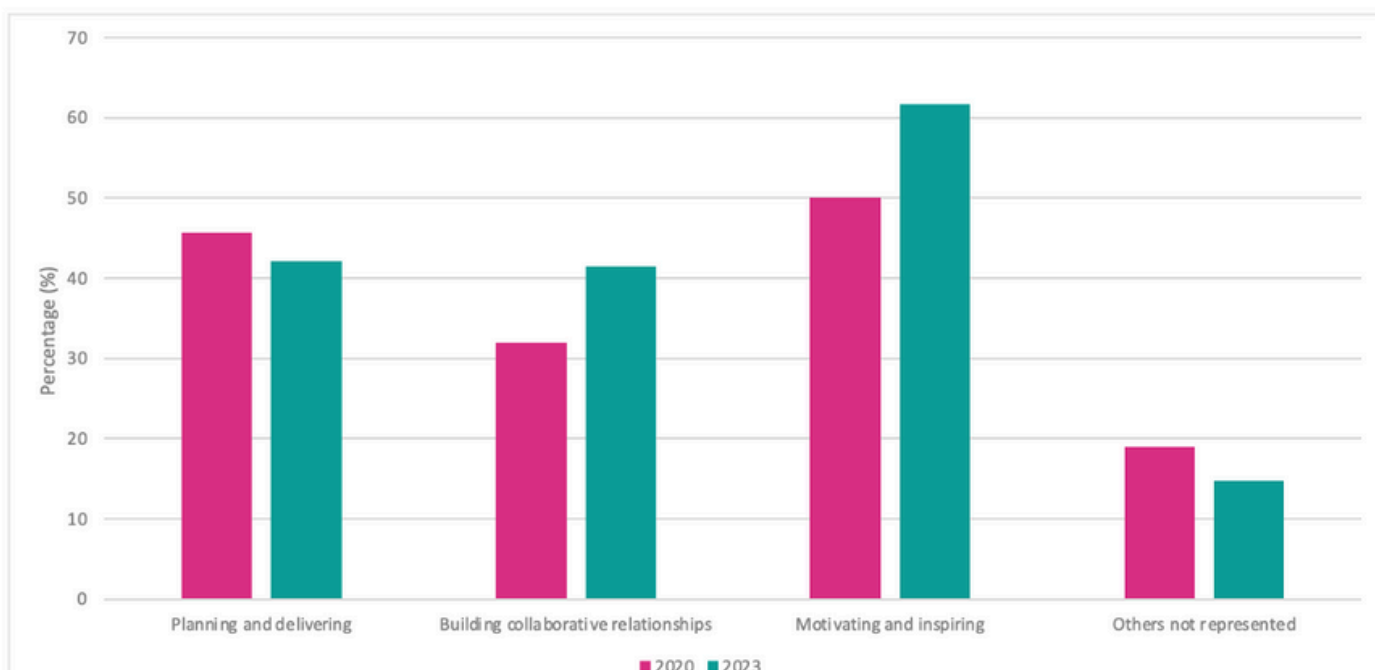
There were a number of questions within the surveys undertaken in 2020 and 2023 which provided an opportunity to explore the primary focus of the role of enterprise and entrepreneurship educators and the competencies required to deliver an effective experience to different groups of stakeholders.

Primary focus

Respondents were asked to identify their primary focus with a choice from the descriptors of the three EEUK Fellowship pathways, without each descriptor being labelled as belonging to a particular pathway (see Table 1).

The primary focus of the majority of survey respondents, in both 2020 and 2023, was 'motivating and inspiring learners in developing enterprising behaviours and skills'. This increased in importance between 2020 and 2023 – 62% of surveyed respondents noted that 'motivating and inspiring learners' was their primary focus in 2023, in comparison to 50% in 2020 (see Figure 2). The percentage of survey respondents identifying 'building collaborative relationships with learners, educators and stakeholders' as their primary focus also increased between 2020 and 2023 – from 38% in 2020 to 53% in 2023. In comparison, the importance of 'planning and delivering effective enterprise and entrepreneurship education curricula' as a primary focus decreased in importance between 2020 and 2023.

Figure 2: Primary focus of survey respondents – A comparison of 2020 and 2023

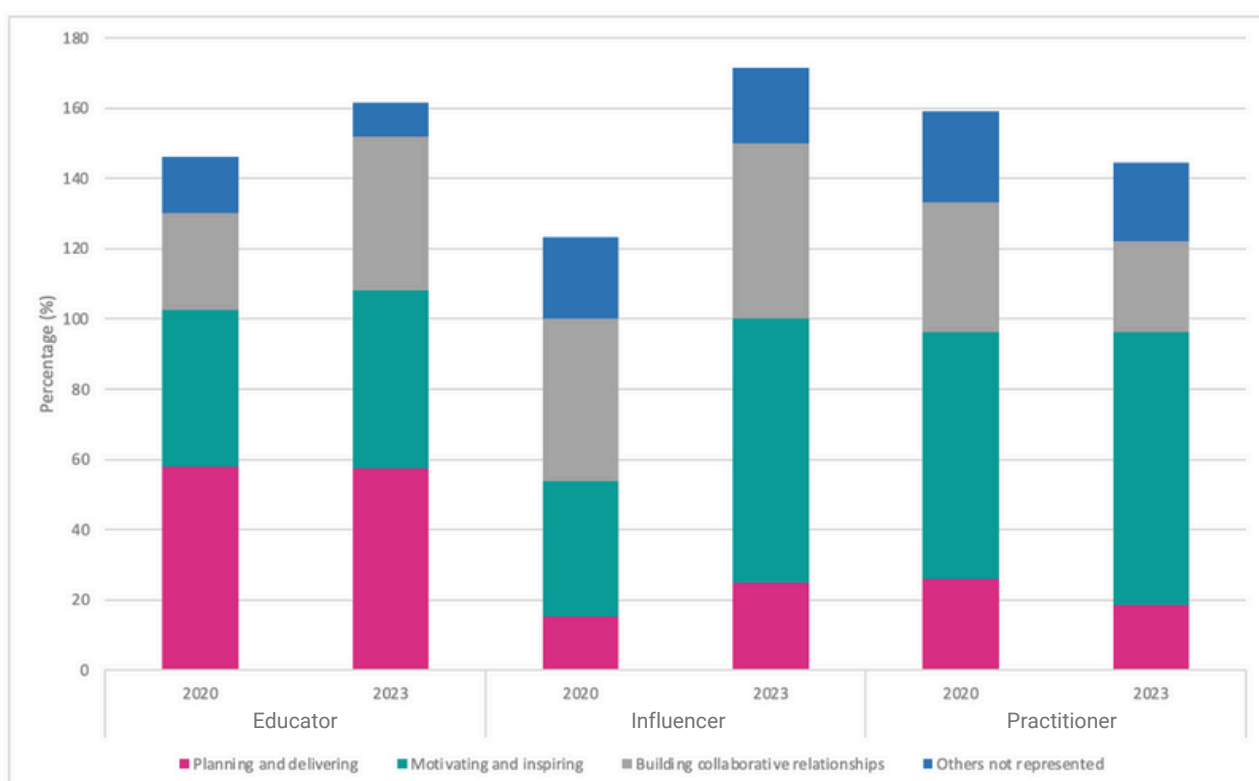


In part, the differences between 2020 and 2023 may reflect the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on understanding how to facilitate engagement of students with online learning as well as the opportunities to engage with others in adding value to teaching and learning activities (e.g. co-creation of the education experience with small business owner-managers). [8]

When survey respondents are grouped by EEUK pathway, a number of differences emerge (see Figure 3). These include:

- The majority of educators indicated that their primary focus related to 'planning and delivering effective enterprise and entrepreneurship education curricula' in both 2020 and 2023. However, the number of educators identifying 'motivating and inspiring learners' and 'building collaborative relationships' as their primary focus increased between 2020 and 2023 showing a shift in primary focus.
- Whilst approximately one in two **Influencers** identified 'building collaborative relationships' as their primary focus in 2020 and 2023, more **Influencers** identified 'motivating and inspiring learners' than 'building collaborative relationships' as their primary focus in 2023. This may provide evidence of an emergent change or shift in the role of **Influencers** and the competencies required to be effective in the role.
- Three in four **Practitioners** identified 'motivating and inspiring learners' as their primary focus in both 2020 and 2023. There was minimal change in the responses of **Practitioners** as to their primary focus between 2020 and 2023.

Figure 3: Primary focus by EEUK pathway – A comparison of 2020 and 2023



Therefore, in summary, the survey suggests that **Academics**, **Influencers**, **Practitioners** are associating with the pathway appropriate to their role. However, the importance attached to the primary focus has weakened over the last three years - spreading across to the primary focus associated with the other pathways - e.g. the number of educators identifying 'motivating and inspiring learners' and 'building collaborative relationships' as their primary focus increased between 2020 and 2023 and the primary focus for **Influencers** shifted from 'building collaborative relationships' in 2020 to 'motivating and inspiring learners' in 2023.

Competencies – Overall Assessment

The survey provided an opportunity to explore the competencies exhibited and, in so doing, key aspects of the current reality of being an enterprise and entrepreneurship educator. Using the enterprise and entrepreneurship educator standards developed by SFEDI and the IOEE in 2017, survey respondents were asked to:

- Identify which competencies feature in their current role
- Rank the time allocated to each competency associated with their current role
- Identify three competencies that they perceive to be the most critical in performing their role to a high standard

The first finding is that when asked to identify which competencies feature in their current role, 'inspire learners in enterprise and entrepreneurship through own enthusiasm and knowledge' (C1) and 'engage with stakeholders to support enterprise and entrepreneurship education' (B3) were ranked in the top three in 2020 and 2023 (see Figure 4). The other two competencies ranked in the top three were: Identify what works well in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (A1) in 2020; and Identify opportunities to work with others in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (C1) in 2023.

The importance of 'inspire learners in enterprise and entrepreneurship through own enthusiasm and knowledge' was reinforced when survey respondents were asked to rank time allocated to the 18 competencies and identify three competencies which were critical to their role. Approximately 40% of survey respondents stated that they allocated the most time to this competency in 2020 and 2023 and 51.8% and 47.7% respectively identified this competency as one of the three competencies which were most critical in performing their role.

Figure 4 highlights the range and degree to which competencies feature in the role of the enterprise and entrepreneurship educator. The other significant competencies for all survey respondents in 2020 and 2023 were:

- Identify what works well in enterprise and entrepreneurship education
- Deliver an effective enterprise and entrepreneurship education experience
- Encourage positive learner behaviours in enterprise and entrepreneurship education

- Update your own knowledge as an enterprise and entrepreneurship educator for through collaboration with others
- Identify opportunities to work with others in enterprise and entrepreneurship education

Figure 4: Competencies that feature in the role of enterprise and entrepreneurship educators – A comparison of 2020 and 2023



As highlighted in Figure 4, the three competencies least likely to feature in the role of the surveyed enterprise and entrepreneurship educators were the same in 2020 and 2023:

- Provide constructive and timely feedback in assessing learning of enterprise and entrepreneurship
- Demonstrate constructive alignment in enterprise and entrepreneurship education
- Apply appropriate methods of assessment in enterprise and entrepreneurship education

These three competencies relate to the primary focus of 'planning and delivering effective enterprise and entrepreneurship education curricula' associated with the [Academic](#) pathway. This is significant when you consider that [Academics](#) made up the majority of respondents in both 2020 and 2023 (65% and 57% respectively).

The second finding is that when respondents were asked to identify which competencies feature in their current role, there were eight competencies which increased in importance between 2020 and 2023 and the majority of these eight related to different aspects of 'building collaborative relationships with learners, educators and stakeholders' such as stakeholder engagement and network and relationship development, associated with the **Influencer** pathway. For example, between 2020 and 2023, there was a 19.4% increase in the number of survey respondents who indicated that 'encourage stakeholders to add value to enterprise and entrepreneurship education' featured in their role.

In comparison, those competencies related to 'planning and delivery of effective enterprise and entrepreneurship education curricula', associated with the **Academic** pathway decreased in importance between 2020 and 2023. There was a 15.5% decrease in the number of survey respondents who identified that 'apply appropriate methods of assessment in enterprise and entrepreneurship education' was associated with their role between 2020 and 2023.

Therefore, the survey highlights that there has been a shift in the competencies which feature in the role of the surveyed enterprise and entrepreneurship educators, with an increase in the importance of competencies related to 'building collaborative relationships' (e.g. encouraging stakeholders to add value and identifying opportunities to work with others), associated with the Influencer pathway, and motivating and inspiring learners (e.g. promoting diversity and inclusion), associated with the **Practitioner** pathway, and a decrease in the importance for those competencies related to planning and delivering curricula, associated with the **Academic** pathway. On the one hand, this shift in the competencies associated with the role could imply that the focus of the role is shifting so different competencies are becoming more important. On the other hand, this shift may be a manifestation of enterprise and entrepreneurship educators being asked to do more so they are having to develop additional competencies to manage competing expectations.

The third finding in this section refers to the importance of competencies related to 'building collaborative relationships' and 'motivating and inspiring learners' was reinforced when survey respondents were asked to identify three competencies that they perceive to be the most critical in executing their role to a high standard. Again, the most important competency was 'inspire learners in enterprise and entrepreneurship through own enthusiasm and knowledge' in both 2020 and 2023 – 51 and 47% of survey respondents identified this competency as one of three competencies most critical to their role in 2020 and 2023 respectively (see Table 2).

To summarise, the overall assessment of competencies suggests that a key aspect of the reality of being an enterprise and entrepreneurship educator is increasingly being able to balance building collaborative relationships, both internally and externally, with motivating and inspiring others. This leads to both challenges and opportunities when managing this balance and there will be implications for the professional development

Table 2: Three competencies perceived to be most critical in executing the role of an Enterprise and Entrepreneurship educator to a high standard – A comparison of 2020 and 2023

Competency	Frequency (%)	Competency	Frequency (%)
2020 - Top Five		2023 - Top Five	
Inspire learners in enterprise and entrepreneurship through own enthusiasm and knowledge (C1)	51.8	Inspire learners in enterprise and entrepreneurship through own enthusiasm and knowledge (C1)	47.7
Deliver an effective enterprise and entrepreneurship education experience (A5)	49.4	Identify what works well in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (A1)	27.9
Identify what works well in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (A1)	40.0	Contribute to the institutional development of enterprise and entrepreneurship education (B6)	26.7
Develop appropriate teaching and learning strategies in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (A2)	32.9	Identify opportunities to work with others in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (B1)	26.7
Encourage positive learner behaviours in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (C2)	28.2	Deliver an effective enterprise and entrepreneurship education experience (A5)	24.4
2020 - Bottom Five		2023 - Bottom Five	
Apply appropriate methods of assessment in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (A6)	9.4	Encourage stakeholders to add value to enterprise and entrepreneurship education (B4)	7.0
Encourage stakeholders to add value to enterprise and entrepreneurship education (B4)	8.2	Make sense of the value in your own networks and relationships as an educator (B2)	5.8
Make sense of the value in your own networks and relationships as an educator (B2)	7.1	Demonstrate constructive alignment in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (A3)	5.8
Provide constructive and timely feedback in assessing learning of enterprise and entrepreneurship (A7)	7.1	Apply appropriate methods of assessment in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (A6)	3.5
Demonstrate constructive alignment in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (A3)	5.9	Provide constructive and timely feedback in assessing learning of enterprise and entrepreneurship (A7)	3.5

needs of enterprise and entrepreneurship educators (e.g. development of know-who as well as know-how).

The next section of the report explores whether enterprise and entrepreneurship educators within the three EEUK pathways have similar or different perceptions as to the competencies required to be effective in the role.

Competencies – Assessment by EEUK Pathway

The analysis of the perceptions of all survey respondents as to the competencies associated with being effective in the role of an enterprise and entrepreneurship educator identified a greater importance being attached to competencies related to 'building collaborative relationships'. In comparison, those competencies related to 'planning and delivery of enterprise and entrepreneurship curriculum' have become less important. However, is this shift evident across each of the EEUK Fellowship pathways?

There were a number of similarities between the three pathways when asked to rank the time allocated to the 18 different competencies – for example, the largest amount of time was allocated to 'inspire learners in enterprise and entrepreneurship through own enthusiasm and knowledge' across all three pathways. However, at the same time, there were a number of significant differences (see Table 3).

Four of the top five competencies that **Academics** spent the most time on in 2020 related to 'planning and delivery of enterprise and entrepreneurship education', i.e. the key competencies associated **Academics** noted that they were spending more time on competencies related to 'building collaborative relationships', associated with the **Influencer** pathway (e.g. identify opportunities to work with others in enterprise and entrepreneurship education) and 'motivating and inspiring learners', associated with the **Practitioner** pathway.

In comparison, both **Influencers** and **Practitioners** were allocating time to a wider range of different competencies. Two of the top five competencies identified by **Influencers** in 2020 and 2023 related to 'building collaborative relationships', i.e. the key competencies associated with the primary focus for the **Influencers** pathway. However, they also noted spending time on competencies related to being an **Academic** (e.g. identify what works well in enterprise and entrepreneurship education) and a **Practitioner** (e.g. encourage positive learner behaviours in enterprise and entrepreneurship education).

Similarly, two of the top seven competencies identified by **Practitioners** in 2020 and 2023 related to 'motivating and inspiring learners', i.e. the key competencies associated with the primary focus for the **Practitioner's** pathway. In comparison, four of the top seven competencies related to 'planning and delivery enterprise and entrepreneurship education curricula'. Indeed, **Practitioners** noted spending more time on these competencies in 2023 than 2020.

Table 3: Competencies that feature in the role of enterprise and entrepreneurship educators – A ranking by EEUK pathway in 2020 and 2023

Note: The shaded boxes highlight the significant competencies associated with the pathway, based on a ranking of time allocated to each competency (Blue = Academic competencies; Pink = Influencer competencies; Green = Practitioner competencies).

Competency	Academic		Influencer		Practitioner	
	2020	2023	2020	2023	2020	2023
Inspire learners in enterprise and entrepreneurship through own enthusiasm and knowledge (C1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)
Identify what works well in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (A1)	(4)	(3)	(5)	(3)	(7)	(2)
Identify opportunities to work with others in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (B1)		(4)	(2)	(2)	(6)	(6)
Encourage positive learner behaviours in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (C2)	(6)	(5)	(3)	(4)	(2)	(7)
Develop appropriate teaching and learning strategies in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (A2)	(2)	(2)			(4)	(3)
Make sense of the value in your own networks and relationships as an enterprise and entrepreneurship educator (B2)				(5)		
Demonstrate constructive alignment in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (A3)						
Engage with stakeholders to support enterprise and entrepreneurship education (B3)			(4)	(6)		(8)
Enable learners to share responsibility for their own learning in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (C3)			(6)		(8)	
Encourage stakeholders to add value to enterprise and entrepreneurship education (B4)			(7)			
Develop and prepare resources for learning and development (A4)	(5)		(7)		(5)	(5)
Promote diversity and inclusion in the delivery and development of enterprise and entrepreneurship education (C4)						
Deliver an effective enterprise and entrepreneurship education experience (A5)	(3)				(3)	(4)
Update your own knowledge as an enterprise and entrepreneurship educator through collaboration with others (B5)						
Contribute to the institutional development of enterprise and entrepreneurship education (B6)						
Apply appropriate methods of assessment in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (A6)						
Provide constructive and timely feedback in assessing learning of enterprise and entrepreneurship (A7)						
Evaluate the learner experience of enterprise and entrepreneurship education (A8)						

Across all three pathways, the 2023 survey respondents identified that they were spending a greater amount of time on a smaller number of competencies critical to their role in 2023 in comparison to 2020. This included competencies both associated with their appropriate pathway but also other pathways – e.g. **Practitioners** noted a shift to competencies associated with the **Academic** and **Influencer** pathways between 2020 and 2023.

Table 4: Changes in time spent on competencies between by EEUK pathway – A comparison of 2020 and 2023

	Pathway		
Competencies	Academic	Influencer	Practitioner
Academic (A1 to A8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify what works well in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (A1) Develop appropriate teaching and learning strategies in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (A2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify what works well in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (A1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify what works well in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (A1) Develop appropriate teaching and learning strategies in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (A2)
Influencer (B1 to B6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify opportunities to work with others in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (B1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify opportunities to work with others in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (B1) Make sense of the value in your own networks and relationships as an educator (B2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify opportunities to work with others in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (B1)
Practitioner (C1 to C4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspire learners in enterprise and entrepreneurship (C1) Encourage positive learner behaviours in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (C2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspire learners in enterprise and entrepreneurship (C1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage positive learner behaviours in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (C2)

Analysing the time allocated to different competencies across the three EEUK pathways suggests that **Influencers** and **Practitioners** perceive a wider range of competencies as critical to their role in comparison to **Academics**. This may be due to the 'clear cut' nature of the academic role and its responsibilities. In comparison, **Influencers** and **Practitioners** are balancing a greater range of activities within their roles, suggesting a lack of clarity or established boundaries in their roles, which may have implications for their personal and professional development needs as well as managing day-to-day work schedules. It could be suggested that where the **Academic** pathway has depth, the **Influencer** and **Practitioner** pathways have breadth.

Survey respondents were asked to identify the three competencies that they perceived to be the most critical in executing their role to a high standard. Table 5 highlights that the most critical competency for survey respondents within each pathway in 2023 was 'inspire learners in enterprise and entrepreneurship through own enthusiasm and knowledge'. This competency increased in importance for both **Influencers** and **Practitioners** between 2020 and 2023, and remained the most critical for **Academics**.

Whilst survey respondents within each pathway do identified competencies associated with their own pathway as critical in executing their role to a high standard, they are also drawing upon competencies from other pathways to be effective and add value. For example:

- The most critical competency for **Academics** in 2020 and 2023, was 'inspire learner in enterprise and entrepreneurship'. This is a competency associated with the **Practitioner** pathway.
- 'Identify what works well in enterprise and entrepreneurship education' (a competency from the **Academic** pathway) was one of the three most critical competencies for **Influencers** in 2020 and 2023.
- **Practitioners** identified competencies related to the **Academic** (i.e. 'deliver an effective enterprise and entrepreneurship education experience') and **Influencer** (i.e. engage with stakeholders to support enterprise and entrepreneurship education) pathways as those most critical in executing their role in 2020 and 2023.

5. What do enterprise and entrepreneurship educators need to know and what skills do they need?

The 2023 survey provided an opportunity to explore any changes in the knowledge and skills requirements of enterprise and entrepreneurship educators and the extent and nature of engagement with different methods to support ongoing professional development.

Knowledge and skills requirements

In 2023, 78.8% of survey respondents identified that their knowledge and/or skills requirements had changed over the last three years. This change is likely to reflect a combination of different influencing factors including:

- the Covid-19 pandemic, the immediate pivot to online delivery, and its impact on the resilience of educators as well as the expectations and needs of students and other groups of stakeholders engaging with Higher Education;
- The changes in the business and enterprise support landscape resulting from the withdrawal of European funding (e.g. ERDF, ESF, Erasmus Plus), the Covid-19 pandemic and the restructuring of responsibilities for the delivery of business and enterprise support;
- The impact of changes in government policy relating to higher education on the posture and strategies of higher education institutions, which sees an emergence of knowledge transfer (KEF and KEC) as the dominant metric within HE, together with refocus on the role of education within the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the pursuit of much fabled 'unicorns'.

In terms of changes by pathway, **Practitioners** were more likely to state that there had been changes in their knowledge and/or skills requirements – 92% of **Practitioners** in comparison to 76% of **Academics** and 73% of **Influencers**. However, there were no significant differences between the three pathways.

Professional development activity

The extent and nature of professional development activity undertaken by enterprise and entrepreneurship educators was only explored in the 2023 survey. A range of different methods have been used by the survey respondents to support their own professional development. For example, approximately one in five survey respondents noted that they had used the following methods: (i) attendance at seminars and conferences; (ii) discussions with peer networks (such as EEUK); and (iii) discussions with colleagues in their institution. In comparison, only 7% used their own research and 10% attended training courses to support their professional development.

Figure 5 highlights the differences between the three EEUK pathways in terms of the type of activities undertaken to support professional development. **Practitioners** were more likely to use discussions with colleagues in their institution as a source of support for professional development. In contrast, **Academics** and **Influencers** reached out more widely and were more likely to use discussions with peer networks as a method to support their professional development, with attendance at seminars and conferences being equal for **Academics**. Finally, **Influencers** were more likely to use training courses.

When asked to rate the usefulness of different professional development activities, more informal/social methods of learning were rated as more useful (see Figure 6). For example, 54% of survey respondents identified discussions with peer networks as very useful. In comparison, 34% rated training courses and programmes as very useful, with X saying they were not useful.

There were a number of differences in the perceived usefulness of different professional development activities between the three pathways. These are highlighted in Figure 6.

Institutional support

In terms of institutional support, the majority (63%) of survey respondents perceived that there was a good or excellent level of support from their own institution to support ongoing professional development. However, as highlighted in Figure 7, there were differences in the perceived level of institutional support by pathway. For example, **Practitioners** were more likely than **Academics** and **Influencers** to rate institutional support as good or excellent – 85% of **Practitioners** rated support from their institution as good or excellent in comparison to 56% of **Academics** and 65% of **Influencers**.

Interestingly, **Academics** were more likely to rate institutional support as poor or satisfactory. In part, this may reflect the challenges faced by **Academics** in shifting learning online during the pandemic and the evidence of the impact of changes in advice and guidance from institutions on how to manage online delivery and how to deliver an effective education experience. [9]

Table 5: Competencies which feature in the role of an enterprise and entrepreneurship educator – Three critical competencies by EEUK pathway in 2020 and 2023

Competency	Academic		Influencer		Practitioner	
	2020	2023	2020	2023	2020	2023
Inspire learners in enterprise and entrepreneurship through own enthusiasm and knowledge (C1)	(1)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)
Identify what works well in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (A1)	(3)		(3)	(3)		(3)
Identify opportunities to work with others in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (B1)			(1)	(2)	(5)	
Encourage positive learner behaviours in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (C2)	(5)					
Develop appropriate teaching and learning strategies in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (A2)	(4)	(2)				
Make sense of the value in your own networks and relationships as an enterprise and entrepreneurship educator (B2)						
Demonstrate constructive alignment in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (A3)						
Engage with stakeholders to support enterprise and entrepreneurship education (B3)			(4)		(3)	
Enable learners to share responsibility for their own learning in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (C3)					(6)	
Encourage stakeholders to add value to enterprise and entrepreneurship education (B4)			(7)			
Develop and prepare resources for learning and development (A4)					(4)	
Promote diversity and inclusion in the delivery and development of enterprise and entrepreneurship education (C4)						
Deliver an effective enterprise and entrepreneurship education experience (A5)	(2)		(5)		(1)	(2)
Update your own knowledge as an enterprise and entrepreneurship educator through collaboration with others (B5)						
Contribute to the institutional development of enterprise and entrepreneurship education (B6)	(6)	(3)	(6)			
Apply appropriate methods of assessment in enterprise and entrepreneurship education (A6)						
Provide constructive and timely feedback in assessing learning of enterprise and entrepreneurship (A7)						
Evaluate the learner experience of enterprise and entrepreneurship education (A8)						

Table 6: Have there been changes in knowledge and skills requirements between 2020 and 2023 by EEUK pathway?

Pathway	Yes	No	Total (n)
Academic	76.7%	23.3%	43
Influencer	73.7%	26.3%	19
Practitioner	92.3%	7.7%	13
All respondents	78.7%	21.3%	75

Figure 5: Use of methods to support professional development (2023)

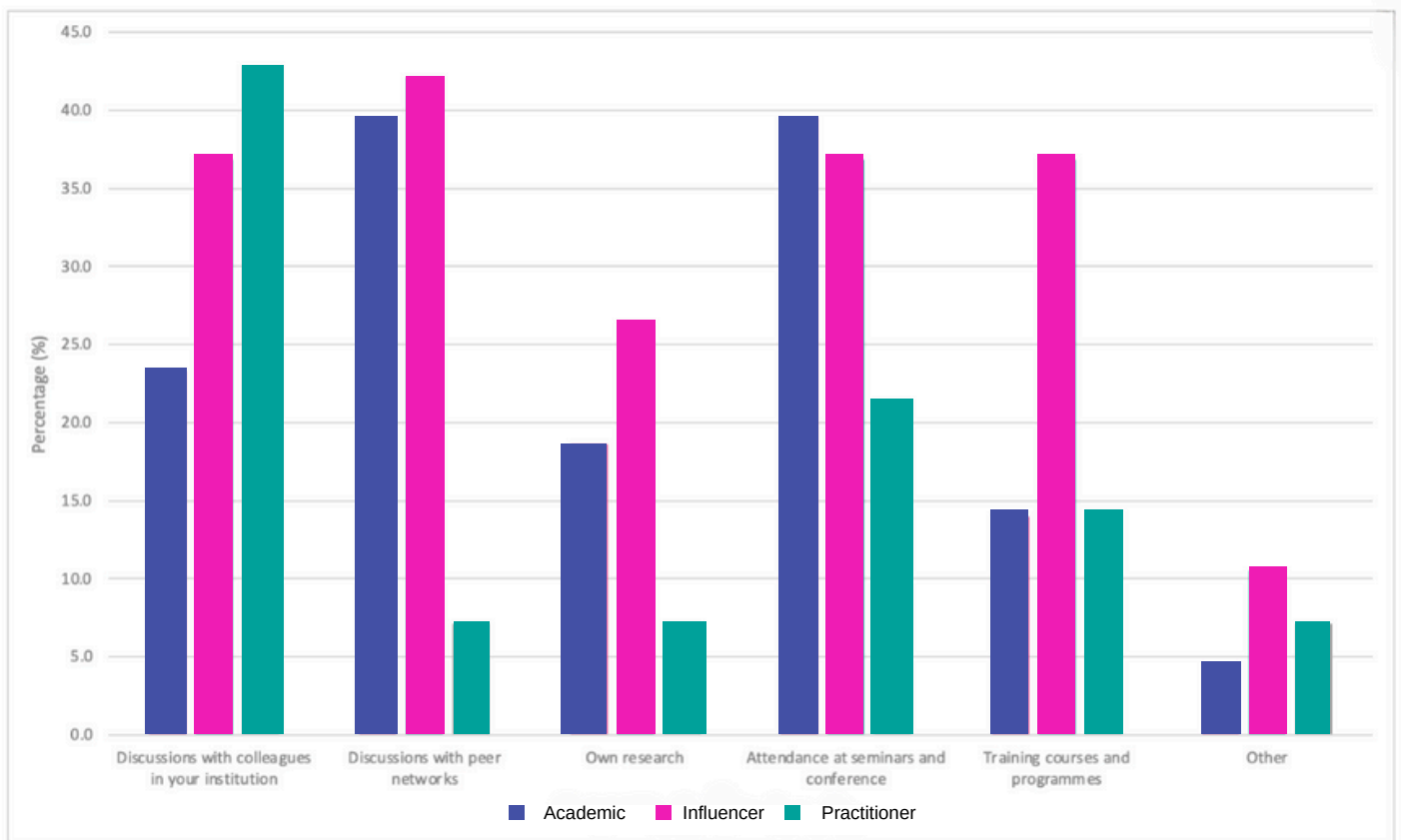


Figure 6: Usefulness of methods to support professional development (2023)

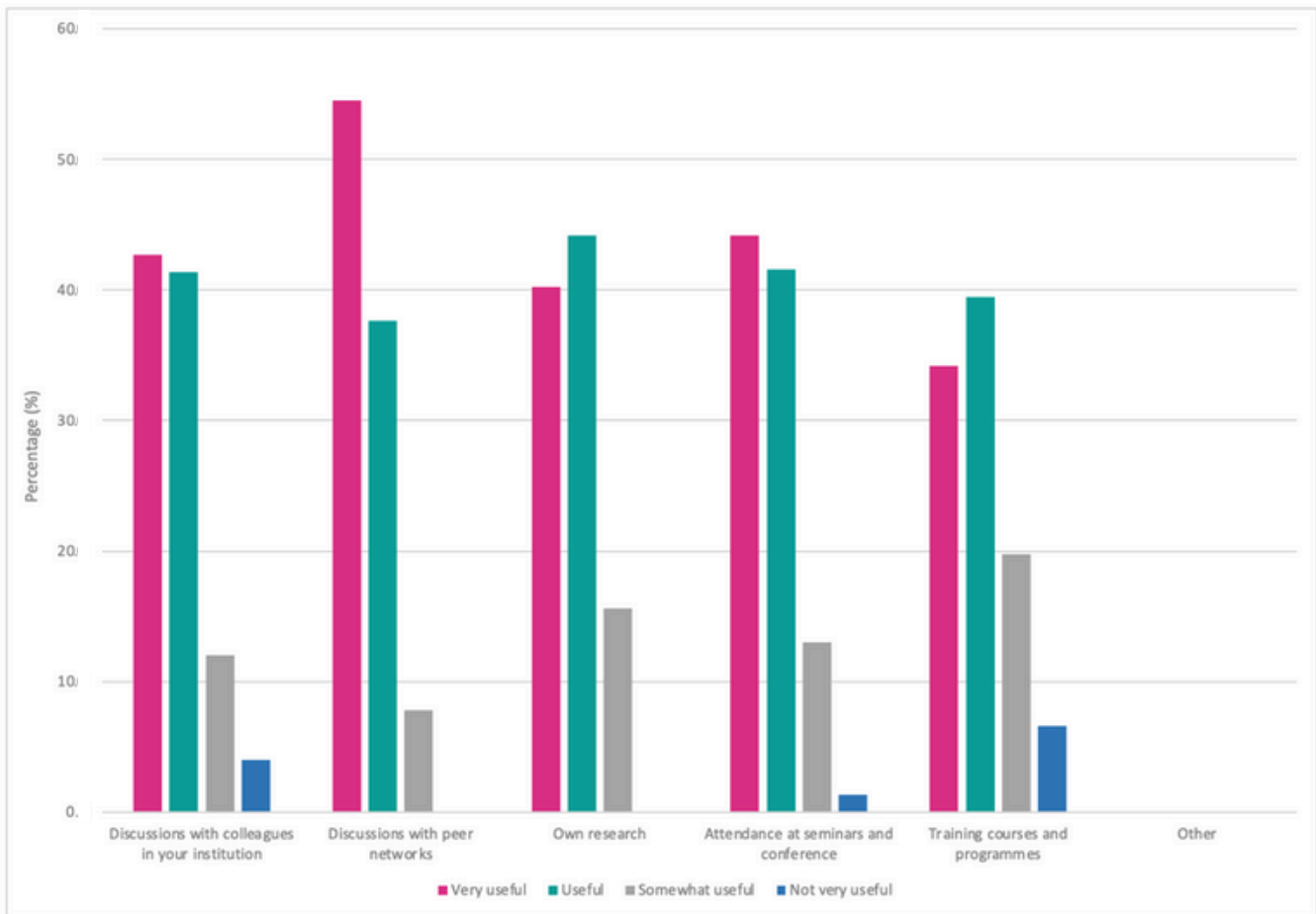
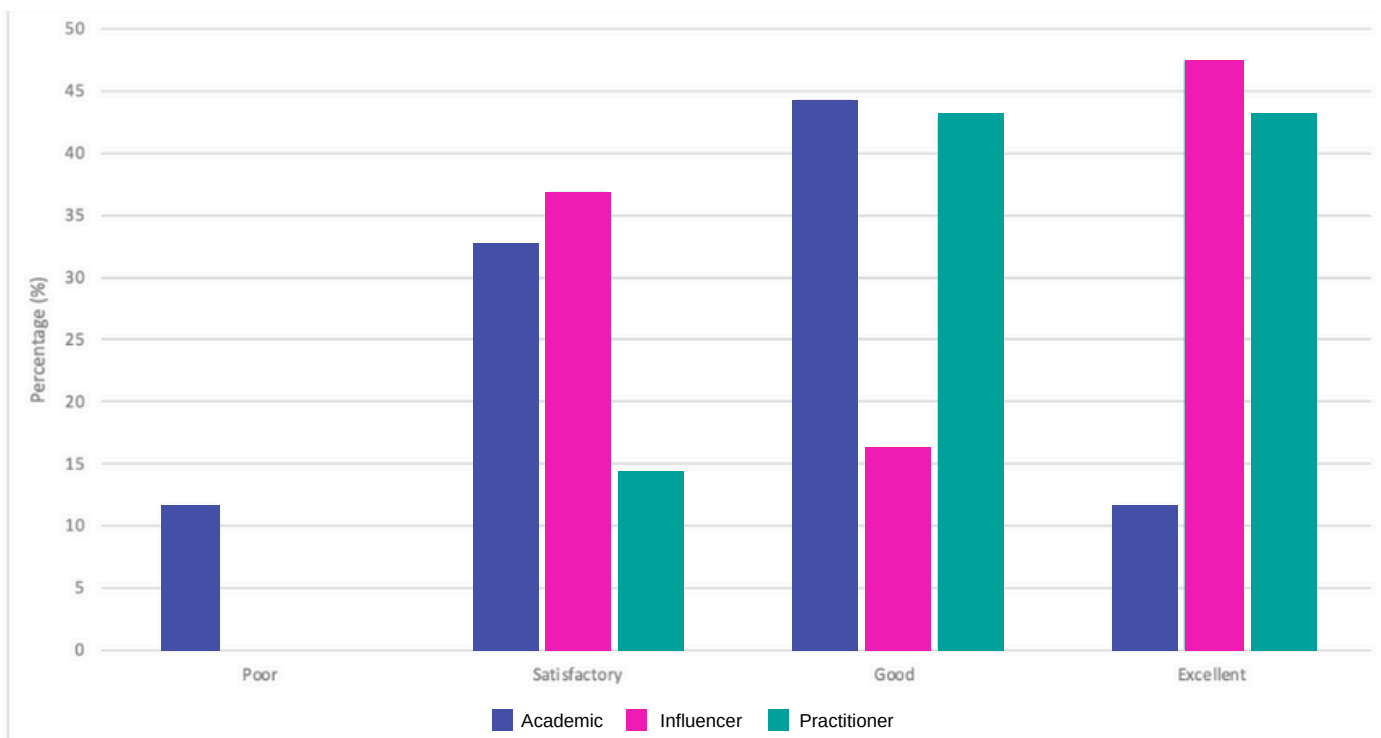


Figure 7: Levels of institutional support by EEUK pathway (2023)



One of the key findings of this report is the diverse and multifaceted nature of the roles that enterprise educators now play. There is no one 'uniform' experience – the reality is different for different groups of enterprise and entrepreneurship educator, as grouped by EEUK pathway. This means there is no one size fits all approach to addressing the professional development needs of enterprise and entrepreneurship educators, so they can navigate a changing and challenging future.

Some Initial Recommendations

A number of recommendations emerge from the exploration of the reality, or lifeworld, of enterprise and entrepreneurship educators over the last three years. These recommendations can be grouped into three bundles: insights; practice; and policy. The key recommendations include:

Insights:

- A qualitative (applied) research project which explores the lived experiences of educators within each of the three pathways and the responses required to effectively support professional development.
- A regular review of the characteristics of enterprise and entrepreneurship educators and the competencies required to add value in the role. The insights from this review could be used to shape membership offers and discussions with different groups of stakeholders.

Practice:

- Development of tools and resources to support enterprise and entrepreneurship educators in developing networks and relationships (e.g. 'how to' guides, blogs on what works well and less well in developing and maintaining relationships with different groups of stakeholders).
- Development of tools and resources to support the exchange of informal/social methods of learning between enterprise and entrepreneurship educators (e.g. development of an experience exchange or knowledge bank).
- Development of a mentoring or coaching programme to support peer-to-peer learning between enterprise and entrepreneurship educators, to assist new educators in developing an understanding of a specific pathway or more experienced educators in shifting between pathways.
- Identification of leads (or 'champions') for each of the EEUK fellowship pathways who can assist in bringing educators within the pathway together and promoting opportunities for professional development.

Policy:

- Addressing the complexity of these roles is clearly an issue for institutional review across salary bands and grading. It is apparent that many enterprise educators work outside the confines of their original band without recognition or institutional support, managing up, managing reputation, and managing change.
- EEUK calls upon government and institutional leaders to demonstrate clear and consistent commitment to the enterprise and entrepreneurship agenda in order to ensure members are able to deliver for our students and graduates.
- EEUK calls upon institutional leaders to commit to the creation of the entrepreneurial ecosystem that is structured and resourced for long term success.

Summary and Recommendations

This report highlights the crucial and evolving role of enterprise and entrepreneurship educators in the UK's higher education system. As the expectations placed on these educators continue to grow, their roles have expanded significantly, a phenomenon identified as 'mission creep'. This evolution underscores the increasing importance of enterprise and entrepreneurship as a core mission within universities, alongside traditional teaching and research.

In the last three years there has been a shift from 'know-how' to 'know-who' and the need to balance inspiring learners through enthusiasm and knowledge with developing networks and relationships with internal and external stakeholders. This will have been challenging given the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the experiences of the learner and changes in the enterprise and entrepreneurial task environment.

One of the key findings of this report is the diverse and multifaceted nature of the roles that enterprise educators now play. There is no one 'uniform' experience – the reality is different for different groups of enterprise and entrepreneurship educator, as grouped by EEUK pathway. This means there is no one size fits all approach to addressing the professional development needs of enterprise and entrepreneurship educators, so they can navigate a changing and challenging future.

Appendix 1: Survey Method

EEUK has undertaken a piece of longitudinal research with its membership (and wider network) which has involved the distribution of a structured online survey in 2020 and 2023.

The two surveys contain a number of questions related to: (i) the personal characteristics of the educator; (ii) their role and primary duties as an enterprise and entrepreneurship educator; and (iii) the competencies utilised in their role. The majority of the questions were the same in both surveys to enable a comparison of responses and identify any similarities and differences in the reality of the role, expectations and the competencies required to be effective in the role. The 2023 survey was updated to include a number of questions related to the knowledge and skills requirements and professional development activities of enterprise and entrepreneurship educators.

There were 116 responses to the survey in 2020 and 128 responses in 2023. The majority of respondents in both surveys were members of EEUK. This increased from 81% in 2020 to 96% in 2023.

Enterprise and entrepreneurship educators in 69 and 52 different institutions responded to the survey in 2020 and 2023 respectively. These institutions can be grouped into four categories – higher education institutions; FE colleges; education consultancies; and public sector bodies and third sector organisations. In both 2020 and 2023, the majority of responses were from individuals working in higher education institutions (90% in 2020 and 92% in 2023).

There were responses from educators in institutions in all UK regions apart from Northern Ireland (in both 2020 and 2023). Outside of the UK, there were responses from higher education institutions in a number of different countries including Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Denmark, North Macedonia, Ukraine and the United States. In both 2020 and 2023, 5% of survey respondents were based in non-UK higher education institutions.

Appendix 2: EEUK Fellowship Pathways

Launched in 2018, the EEUK Fellowships provide enterprise and entrepreneurship educators with an opportunity to gain public profile and acknowledgement for their professional practice. They provide enterprise and entrepreneurship educators with national recognition for their existing practices and they provide access to a community of individuals who have obtained the EEUK Fellowship.

EEUK Fellowships are clustered around three pathways: **Academic**, **Influencer**, and **Practitioner**. The **Academic** (or educator) pathway focuses on planning and delivering effective enterprise and entrepreneurship curricula. The **Influencer** pathway focuses on building collaborative relationships with learners, educators and other stakeholders. The **Practitioner** pathway focuses on motivating and inspiring learners in developing enterprising and entrepreneurial behaviours and skills.

To provide an analysis framework for this report, responses to the surveys undertaken in 2020 and 2023 have been coded to the three EEUK Fellowship pathways. In order to develop this framework, respondents were asked to: (i) provide their current job title and (ii) identify from a list of job titles their primary enterprise or entrepreneurship education role. Based on these two responses, respondents were allocated to one of the three pathways.

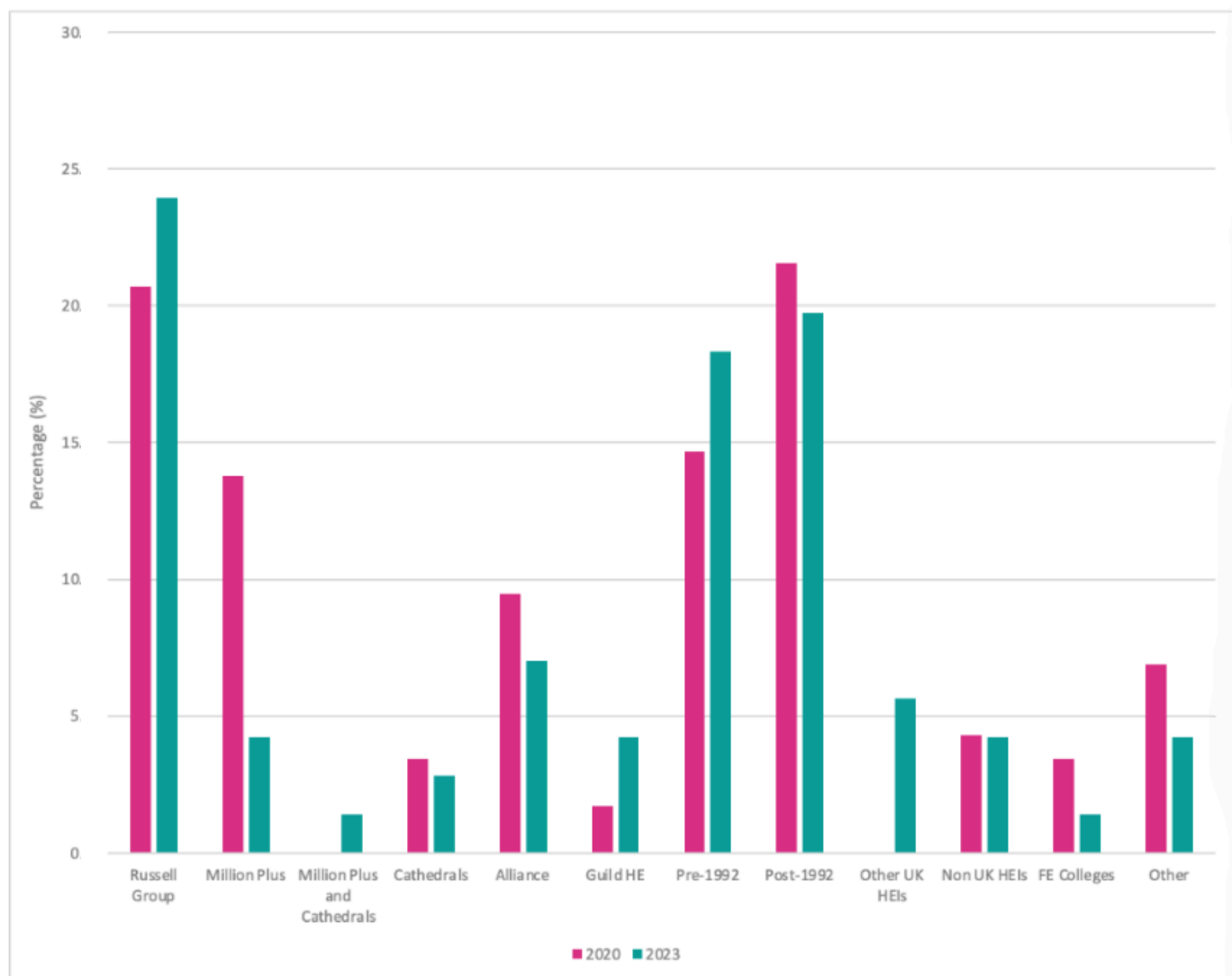
The coding framework is summarised in the table below along with the number of responses in 2020 and 2023.

In terms of pathways:

- The majority of respondents in both 2020 and 2023 were **Academics** (65% in 2020 and 57% in 2023)
- Whilst there was a decrease in the number of **Academics** between the two surveys, there was an increase in the number of **Influencers** from 11% in 2020 to 21% in 2023. In part, this increase reflects the number of Enterprise Centre Managers responding to the survey in 2023
- The number of **Practitioners** was somewhat similar between the two surveys – 23% in 2020 and 22% in 2023.

Title	Pathway	2020	2024
Lecturer	Academic	27	24
Academic/Faculty Staff	Academic	15	15
Teaching Assistant	Academic	1	0
Education/Curriculum	Academic	8	9
Developer	Academic	2	2
Careers Adviser	Practitioner	1	3
Enactus Mentor	Practitioner	0	0
Technology Transfer Officers	Practitioner	0	0
Entrepreneurs in Residence	Practitioner	1	1
Placement Managers	Practitioner	0	0
Start-up Advisers	Practitioner	14	14
Business Development Managers	Practitioner	2	1
Enterprise Centre Managers	Influencer	4	15
Careers Service Management	Influencer	2	3
Technology Transfer Managers	Influencer	0	0
Incubator Managers	Influencer	3	2
Responsible for KTPs/Projects	Influencer	3	0
Head of Enterprise and Entrepreneurship	Influencer	18	19
Other	Individually mapped: Academic Influencer Practitioner	15 (5) (6) (4)	20 (4) (9) (7)
TOTAL		116	128

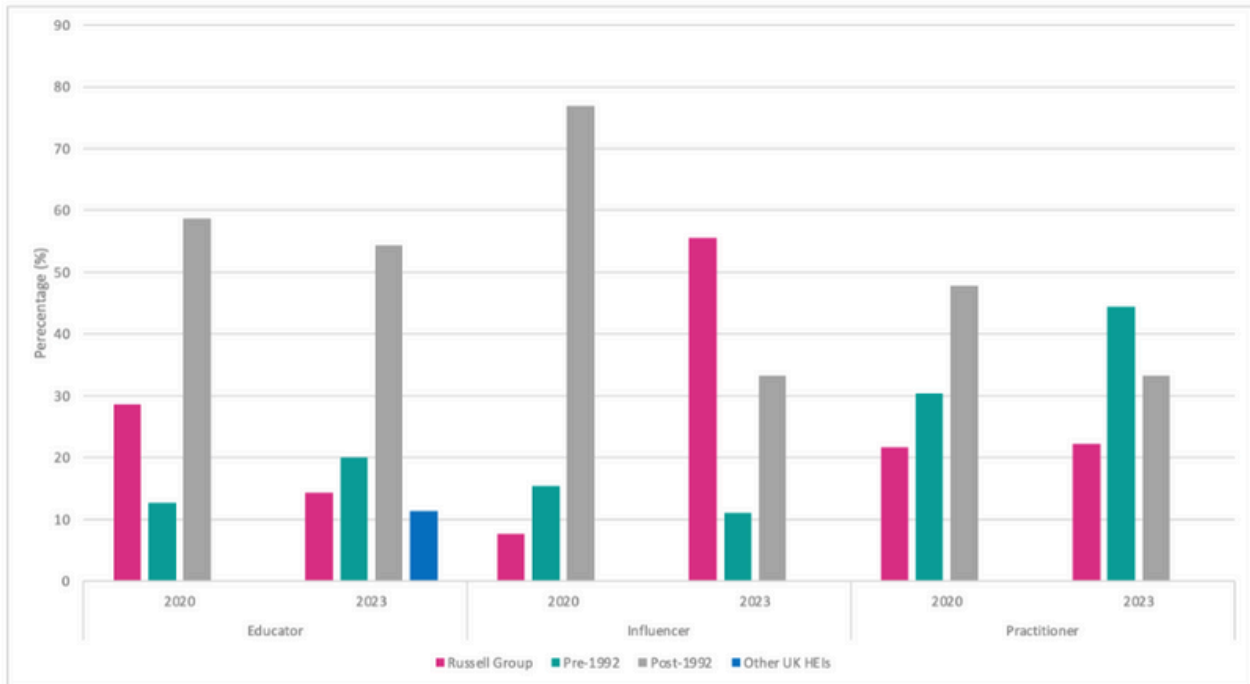
Appendix 3: Survey respondents by type of institution – A comparison of 2020 and 2023



As with personal characteristics, there are differences in the pathways by institution type (see Figure 3). These included:

- **Academics** were more likely to be employed in post-1992 institutions. Approximately one **Academic** in two were employed in post-1992 institutions in 2020 and 2023.
- Whilst three in four **Influencers** worked in a post-1992 institution in 2020, this has had decreased to one in three by 2023. In comparison, **Influencers** were more likely to be employed in Russell Group institutions in 2023 (but this increase is from a small base in 2020).
- There was no significant difference in the employment of **Practitioners** by institution type. For example, four in five **Practitioners** were employed by pre or post-1992 institutions in 2020 and 2023.

Institutional Types by EEUK pathway – A comparison of 2020 and 2023



Given what we know about the extent and nature of enterprise and entrepreneurship education across different types of institutions (Bozward et al., 2022) [10], these differences in the pathways by institution type may lead to certain expectations related to the role and, as a result, the competencies which are perceived as important and/or required to deliver an effective education experience. This is explored within the next section of the report.

FOOTNOTES

- [1] Gibb, A.A. (2010) Concepts into Practice: Meeting the Challenge of Developing Entrepreneurship Educators around an Innovative Paradigm, *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour and Research*, 17, 2, pp. 146-165.
- [2] Pittaway, L., Henry, C., Kirby, D. and Thompson, J. (2023) The History of Entrepreneurship Education in the United Kingdom, 1860-2020. Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4318025> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4318025>.
- [3] A summary of the survey method is outlined within Appendix 1.
- [4] QAA (2018) Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Education – Guidance for UK Higher Education Institutions, Quality Assurance Agency, Cheltenham.
- [5] Sear, L. (2014) Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Education: Some Reflections from Educators. Paper presented at the 'Practice into Policy: Global Summit of Entrepreneurial Educators', Swansea, 25th-26th June.
- [6] Further information on the EEUK pathways and the way in which survey respondents were classified by EEUK pathway is provided in Appendix 2.
- [7] Thomassen, M.L., Williams Middleton, K., Ramsgaard, M.B., Neergaard, H. and Warren, L. (2019) Conceptualising Context in Entrepreneurship Education: A Literature Review, *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour and Research*, 26, 5, pp. 863-886.
- [8] Park, A., Cummins, S., Hudson, E. and Sawyer, V. (2022) Concern, Co-creation and Creativity: A Shared and Creative Response to Student Concern. Paper presented at Learning and Teaching Conference 2022, Leeds.
- [9] QAA (2023) Student Engagement Guidelines: Learning from innovative practices introduced in response to COVID-19, Quality Assurance Agency, Cheltenham.
- [10] Bozward, D., Rogers-Draycott, M., Smith, K., Mave, M., Curtis, V., Aluthgama-Baduge, C., Moon, R. and Adams, N. (2023) Exploring the Outcomes of Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Education in UK HEIs: An Excellence Framework Perspective, *Industry and Higher Education*, 37, 3, pp. 345-358.