



Teaching Excellence Alliance

The Teaching Excellence Alliance is a collaborative venture which brings together Alliance universities to promote excellent teaching and learning, and to better understand and define – as well as champion and showcase – excellent teaching at Alliance institutions.

The Teaching Excellence Alliance recognises that **sustained student success in professional and technical education** is achieved through the expertise and commitment of individual teaching staff, of innovative course design teams, and of institutional-level interventions.



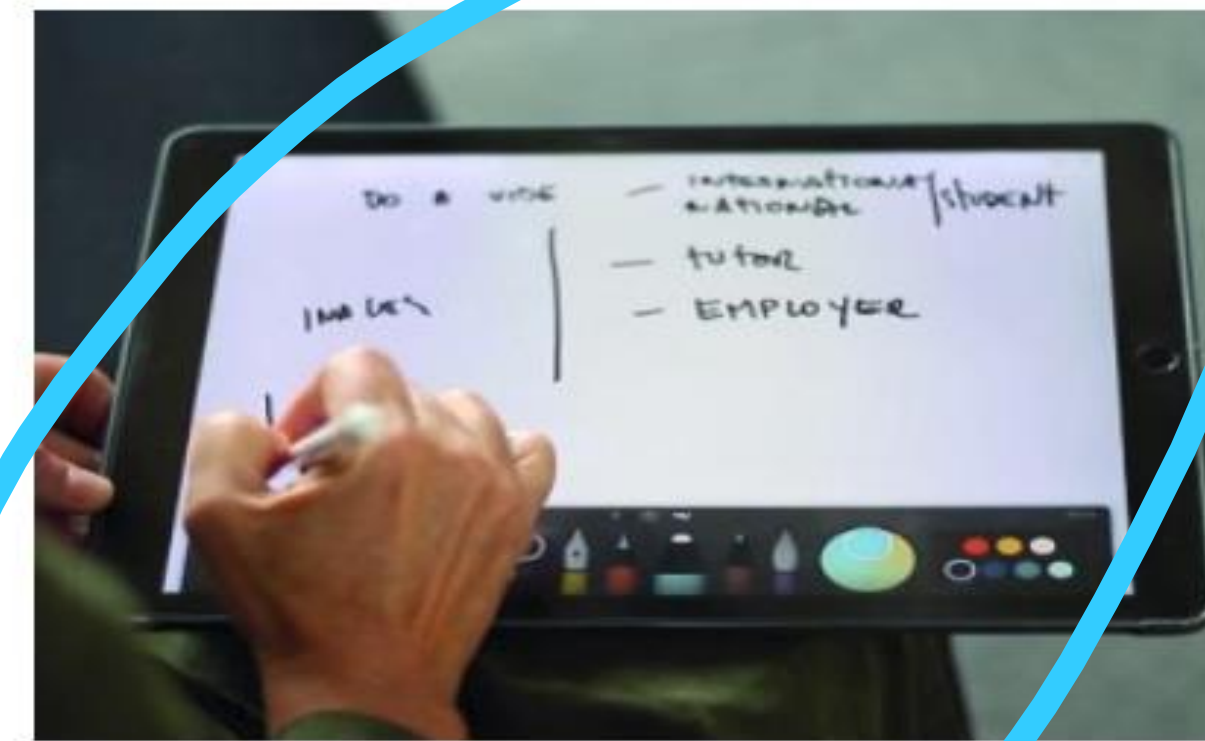
Further details are available below and by subscribing to the TEA Newsletter through tea@unialliance.ac.uk



What is the TEA?



The Peer Review College



The TEA Sandpit



Accelerator Projects and Special Interest Groups



TEA Collaborative Professional Development



TEA Events



Meet the TEA team



UA Teaching Showcase



Support staff to improve their teaching practice and develop innovative courses

Support excellent partnership and engagement between academics, students and employers

Define, share and showcase distinctive and effective University Alliance teaching

Activities

Collaborative Professional Development

Shared resources and toolkits

Sandpit Innovative Course Development

Special Interest Groups

Webinars

Networks, e.g. SU VP Education

Expanded opportunities and collective intelligence

Evidence of commitment to T&L for TEF submission

Disseminated findings and published REF-able research

Benefits

Development of innovative pedagogy & excellent courses

Professional development

Engagement and endorsement by students (link to NSS and KIS)

Impact evidence through rigorous evaluation

Keep and attract good academic staff

Value-added tools and approaches to enhance teaching and learning experience

Evidence our success: excellent, distinctive & delivers better outcomes for students

Goals

Develop students equipped with skills and aptitudes to succeed in a new industrial strategy context

Celebrate Alliance universities as leaders in professional and technical education for student success

Retain a competitive edge in the sector as evidenced in increased policy influence, secure funding, prestige and student numbers.



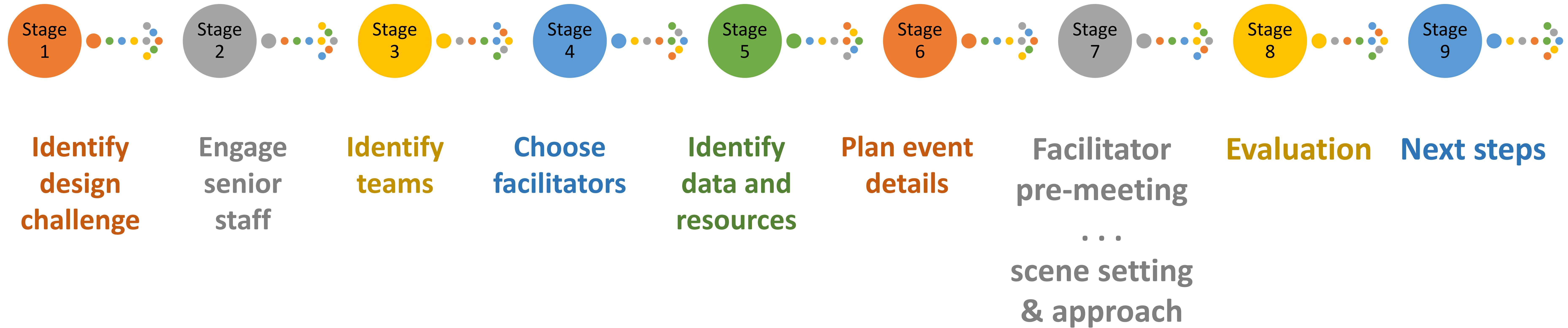
The TEA Sandpit

... intensive discussion forums where free thinking is encouraged, enabling staff and students to delve into wicked problems on the institutional agenda and uncover innovative solutions. . .

... in a safe, collaborative space where creativity is key . . .

Working together teams search for answers to a particular question or problem area, finding a number of quick-wins, proposals that are high-impact and easy to implement, before crafting longer term solutions.

each
Excellence
Alliance

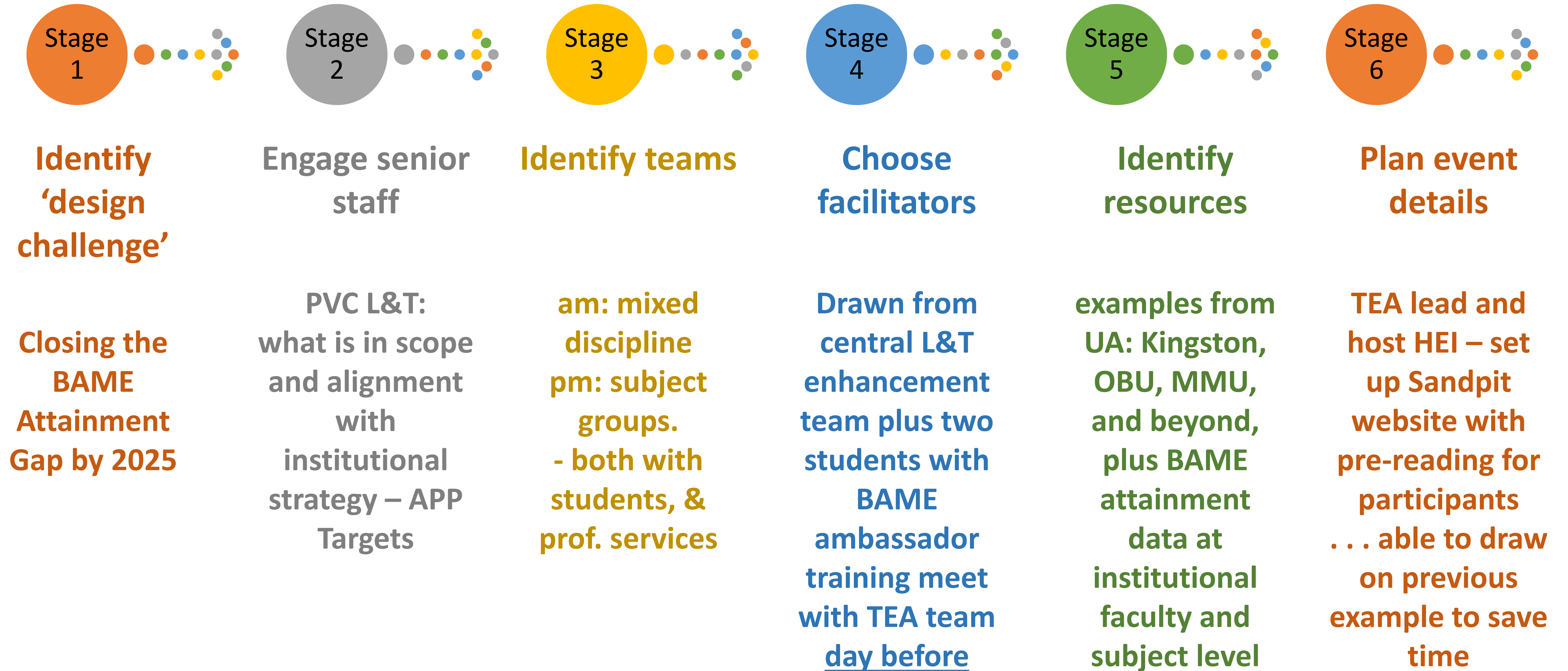


The TEA Sandpit . . . in stages

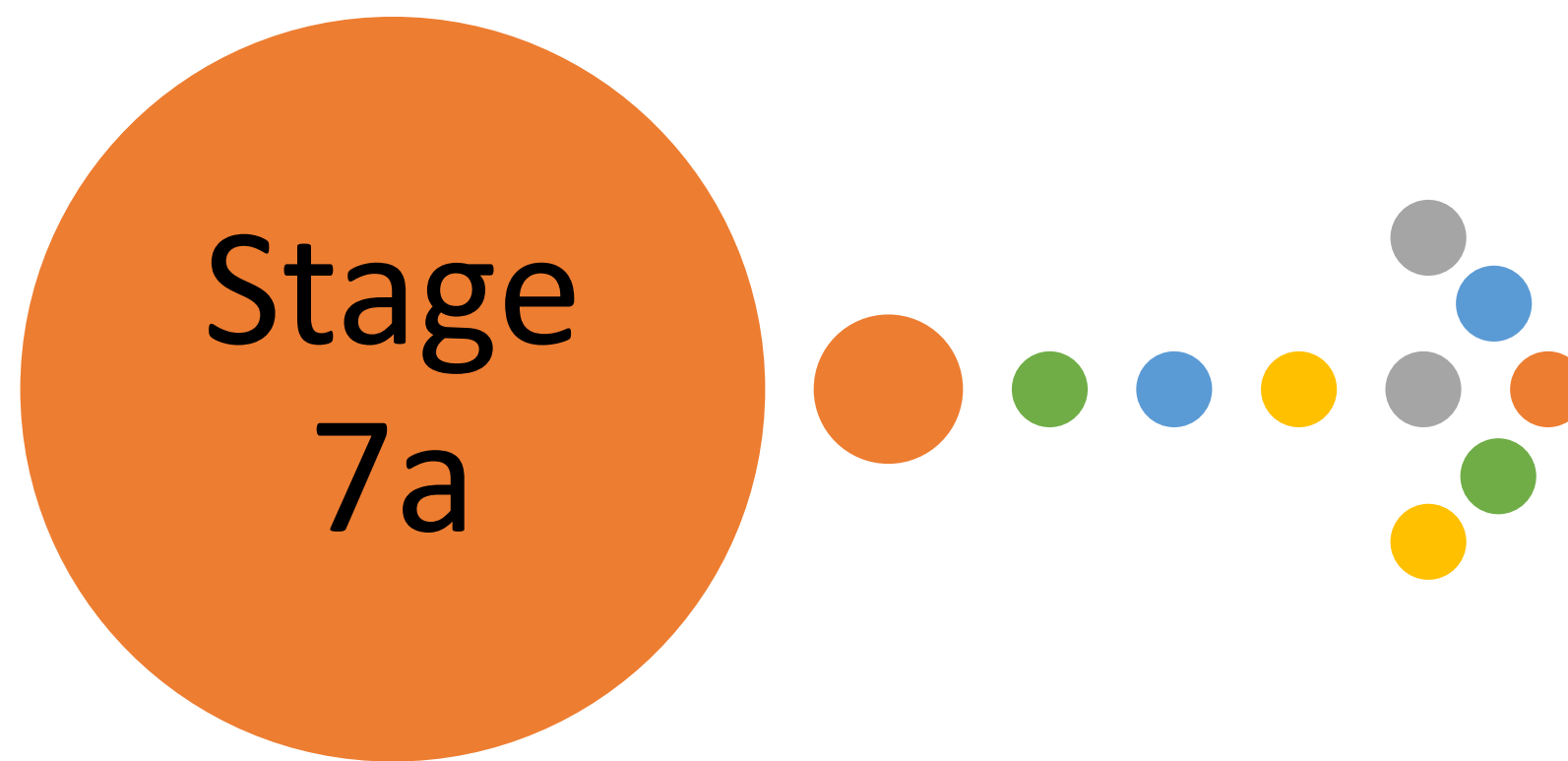
The SANDPIT one-day event

With successive Sandpits, stages 1 > 6 have become more efficient and thus more cost-effective

Before the Sandpit – BAME example



The Sandpit Event



Facilitators

(who have received prior briefing and additional access to the Sandpit Website) meet with the TEA Team on the afternoon before the Sandpit:

- Discuss their role = not scribes or presenters, not leading the discussion
- Briefing on the running order, approach, style and methodology for the Sandpit ...
- Raise any concerns, e.g. sensitivities around subject matter and language ... The starter activity will be determined at this point to ensure facilitators are comfortable ...



Design Challenge:
What will be *'the difference that will make the difference'* in outcomes for ALL your students?

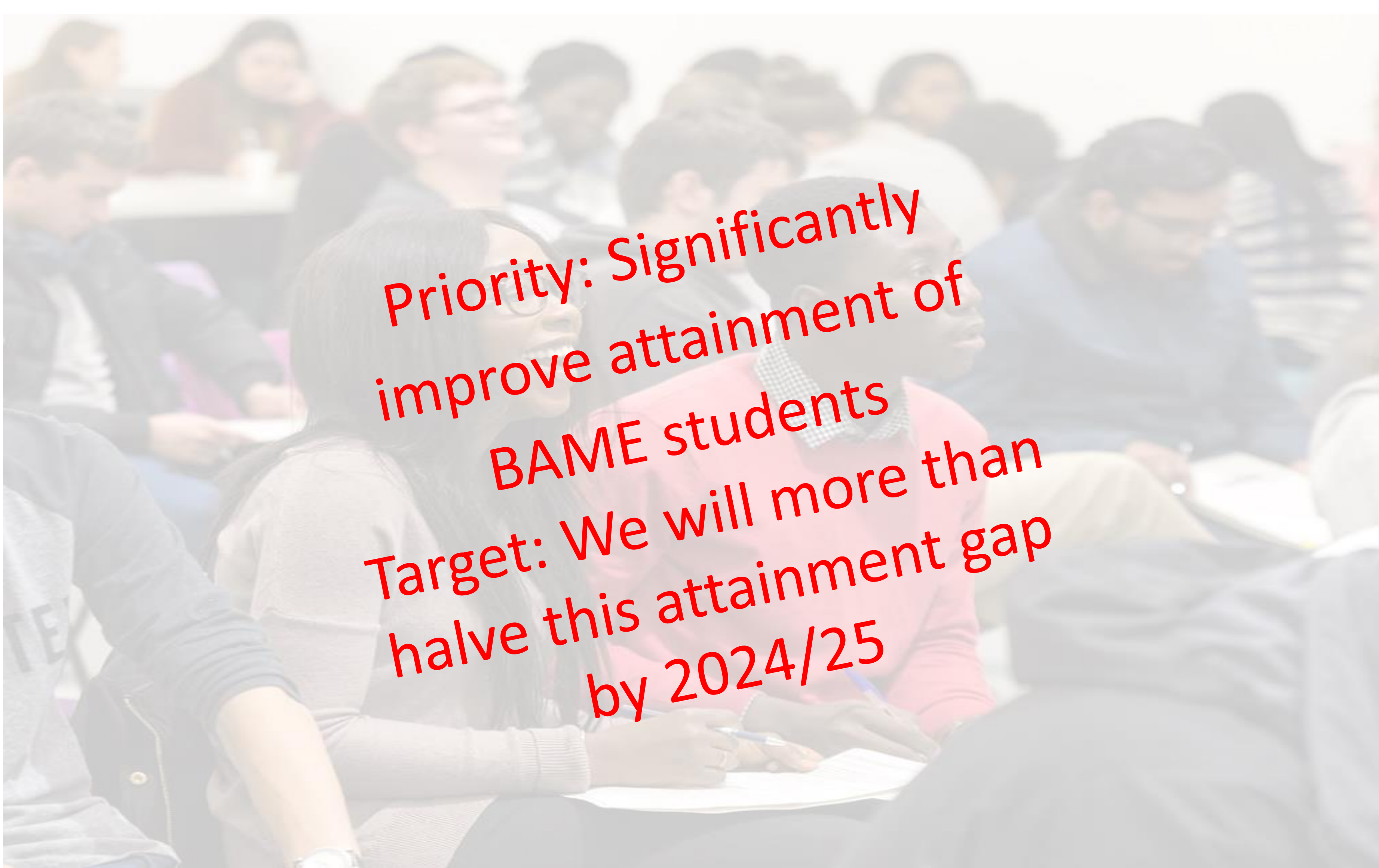
High Impact
Easy
URGE! (Urgent)

Low Impact
(easy)
... why??

Priority: Ensuring ALL of our Teaching and Learning is Inclusive

High Impact
Tricky!
Long-term

Low Impact
Slow
Don't do!




Priority: Significantly improve attainment of BAME students
Target: We will more than halve this attainment gap by 2024/25



Priority: Embedding the ACADEMIC ENHANCEMENT FRAMEWORK at course level

The Sandpit Event

Stage
7 b



Morning session:

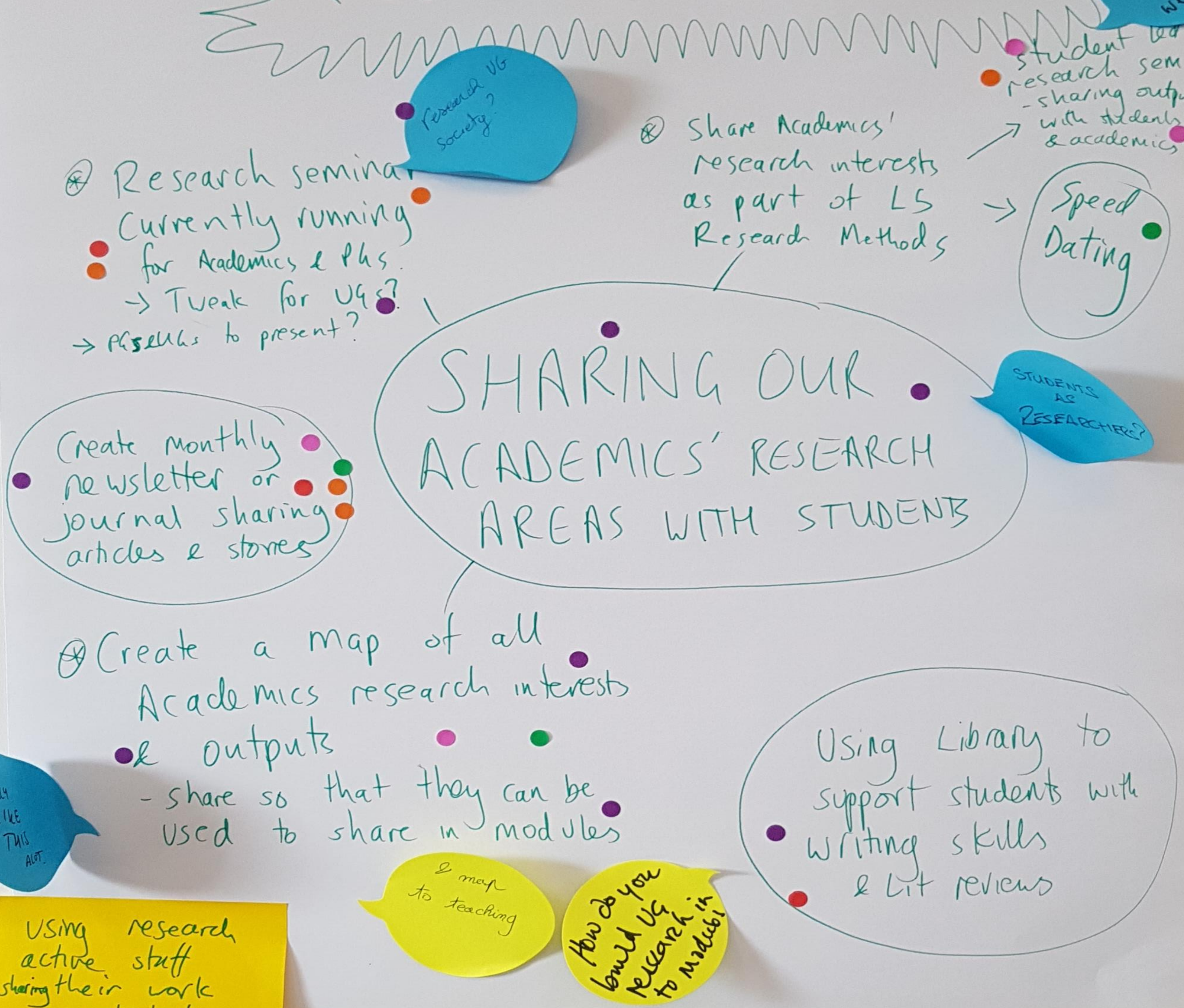
- 15 mins MAX - SLT - scene setting and aims for the institution
- ‘Mind the Gap’ sets the Design Challenge . . .
where are you now and where do you need to be

Short term ‘quick wins’ by end of . . .

Longer term strategic plans by

QUICK WINS

RESEARCH ACTIVE



The Sandpit Event

Before lunch . . .

Focus on high impact 'quick wins':

- shared poster and peer feedback interrogation
- individual action plans



The Sandpit Event

Afternoon session: Focus on strategic and radical change

- poster - presented to peers for popular vote
- shared action plan – taken back to ‘home’ team

Tangible outputs by end of day create a sense of momentum

Stage
7 b



Reading list

- More academic articles on equity (reading list)
- Practical sessions - discussed with some national lead
- Check the language I am using with students and provide glossary to help research

BUSINESS

- Know names + life stories
- Lead as app. Know the names of my students + use them

MATHS

- Start - stream
- Create opportunities to integrate with other students

Other notes:

- Have more flexibility in arrangement of students
- Have more flexibility in arrangement of students
- Have more flexibility in arrangement of students

Week 4* ish

awareness: on a discourse approach

most support - drive tip

opportunities - up on non-attendance

social interaction - social exercise/movement

academic + wellbeing - engineer responsibility

community - walk + talk

*** bubble bursting** - normalise + of learning activities + chambers - comfort zones

Belonging - No outsiders

Safety net beyond course

choice

ways of participating

induction

open door physical + virtual

Community

Upskilling + training

Next year could deliver an impact

SEEMING + BEING SEEN

Collaboration

Progressing already

Potential high impact

Next year could deliver an impact

SEEMING + BEING SEEN

Collaboration

Progressing already

Potential high impact

Representation

- authors / research
- materials (eg pictures on slides)
- guest speakers

students

- mix groups
- everybody presents to class
- cultural reversal
- cultural sensitivity

emotional intelligence

Language

belonging

Project → **Enhancing Staff-Student Relationships to build inclusion within a cohort.**

SENSE OF BELONGING

Induction

- Name it
- Learn names
- Contact at outset
- Set high expectations
- Understand each student's personal expectations!

Expectations

Individualising

Engagement

Academic advising

Assessment

Staff development

INTERVENTION / WHEN / IMPACT

PLANNING AN AWAY DAY

CREATING JOINED UP THINKING / SHARING EXPERTISE TEACHING PRACTICE

awariness: on a discourse approach

post support

social interaction

academic + wellbeing

community

Subject Coordinator Programme Lead & SSC

BREAKING BARRIERS

Aspect of Inclusivity

Agency

Aims of intervention

Next steps

Impact

Staff development

YEAR 1 UG

Module-based

Master announcement

awariness: on a discourse approach

post support

social interaction

academic + wellbeing

community

opportunities

social interaction

academic + wellbeing

community

Creating US

Welcoming The Change: The Induction

GENERAL CONTENT

YEAR 1

YEAR 2

POSTGRADS

SUCCESS

CELEBRATE DIFFERENCE

SUPPORT NEEDS

AGENCY

AVOID NEGATIVE

STAFF + STUDENT

ENVIRONMENT

COMMUNITY (BELONGING)

VARIETY

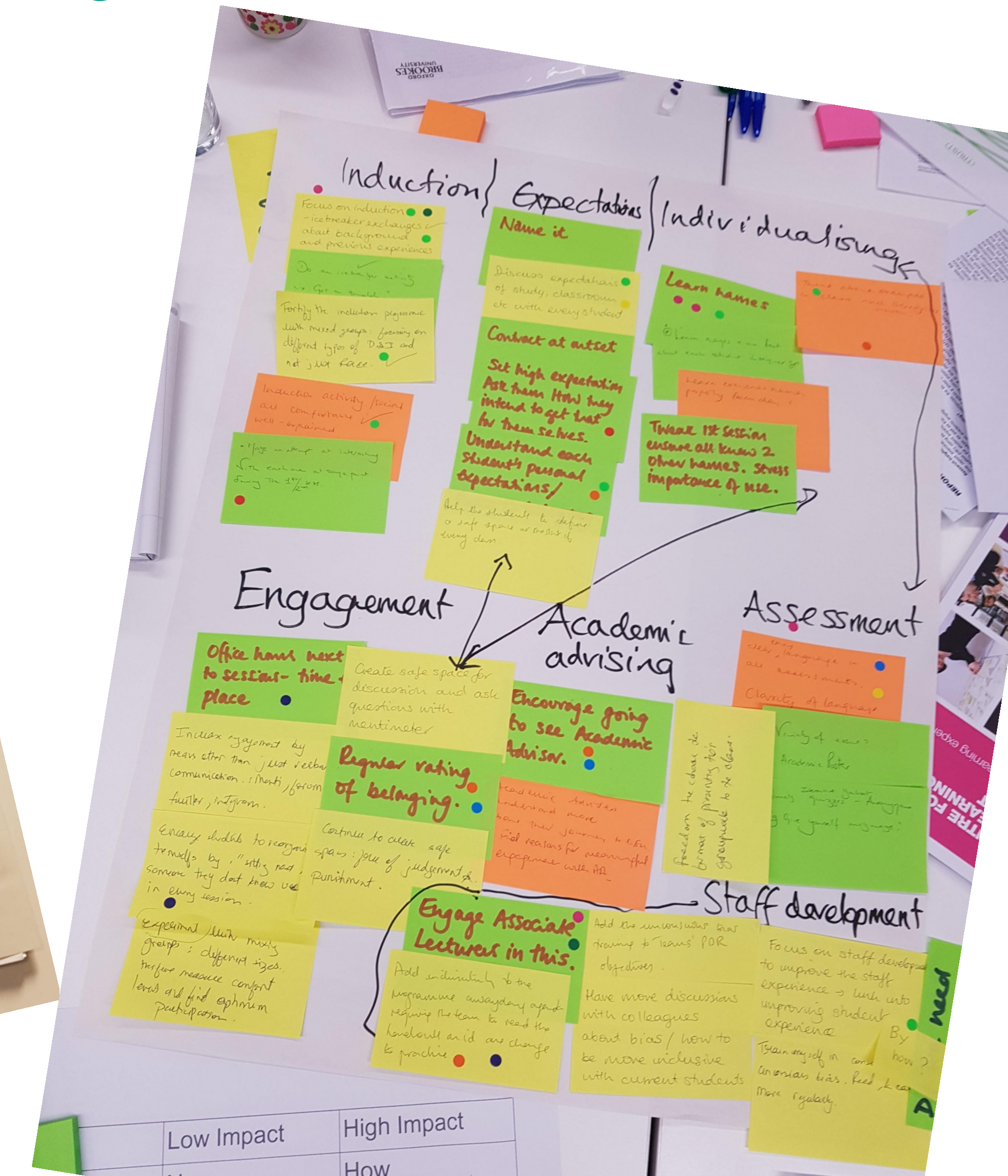
INDIVIDUAL

15 Alliance Universities

300+ participants

- SU Presidents and VP Education
- Ed Dev teams
- Academic Programme Leads
- HoDs
- Course and Module leaders

Reports sent back after the event include barriers and issues put to one side in the 'Car Park'. . . and wished for with a 'Magic Wand'





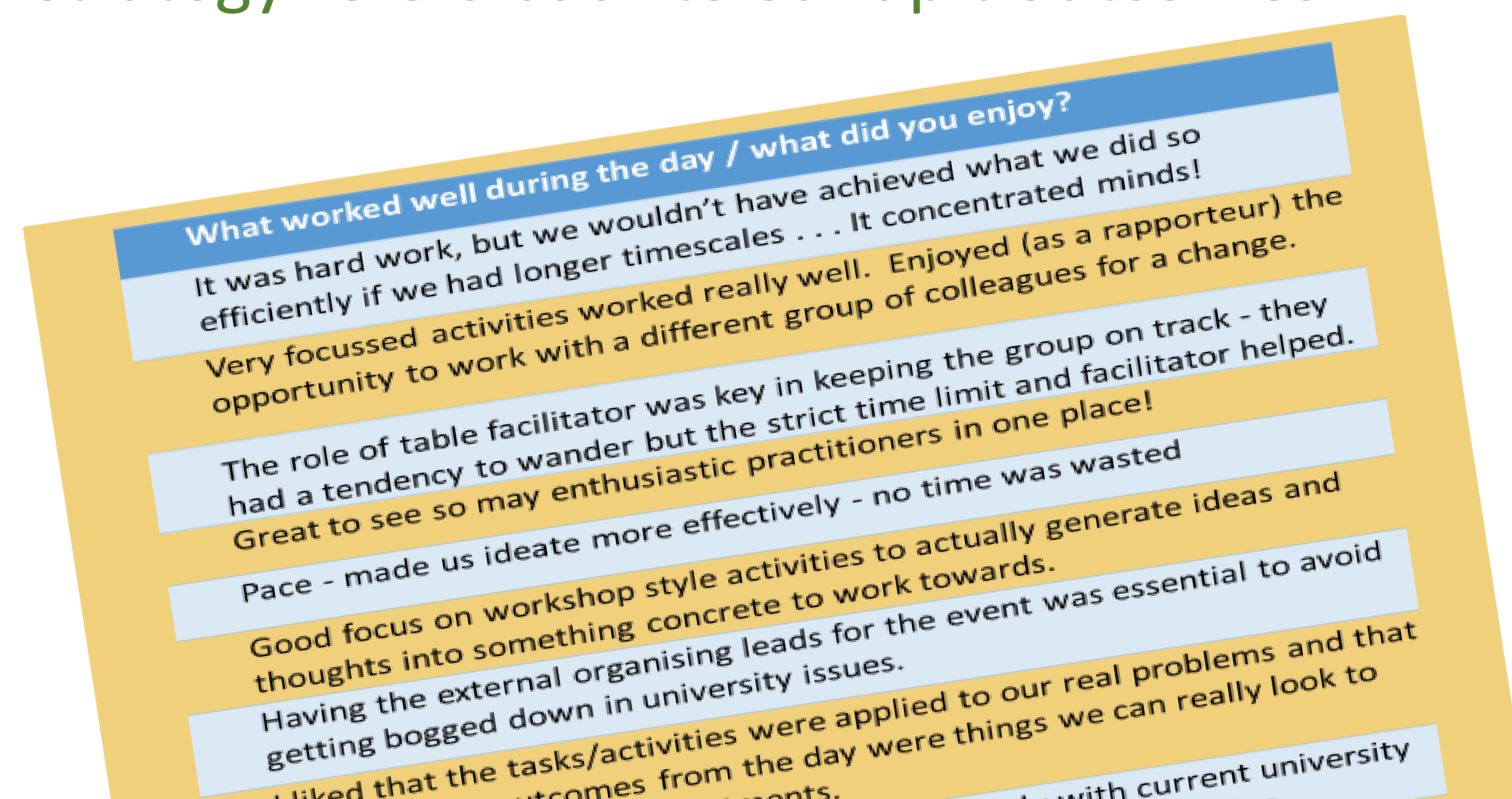
Immediate participant feedback on the day:



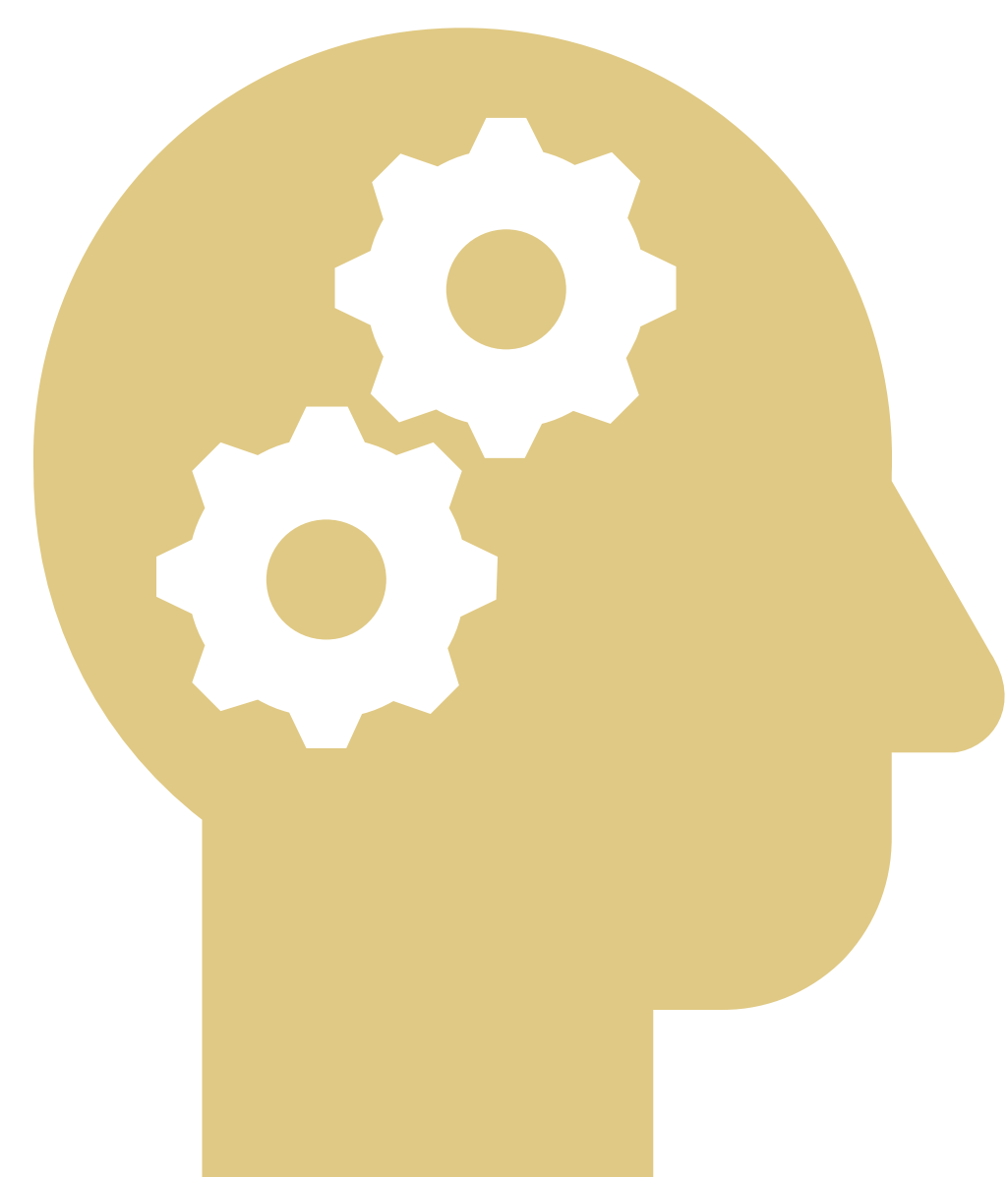
100% of responses gave positive feedback on 'format' and 'experience'

- TEA lead feedback to host HEI on key themes and outcomes to inform . . .
- TEA team use to inform NEXT Sandpit
- TEA undertakes meta-evaluation of all Sandpits . . . Long term impact study

- Host shares action plans with SLT Team
- Top-voted plans are taken forward as actions
- Sandpit approach embedded in faculty QA
- Teams report on progress to L&T events
- PDRs, course reviews, and institutional strategy refers back to Sandpit outcomes



The TEA Sandpit Benefits



HIGH IMPACT

Quick wins and concrete outputs / products / planning in one day

Wins over cynics

COLLABORATIVE & INCLUSIVE

Student co-creation

Academic & Professional Services

Uses existing expertise

SUSTAINABLE

Facilitators trained to cascade in-house

CPD for facilitators

LOW TECH

Post-its, pens, dots & posters

(no phones or laptops)

ADAPTABLE

w.r.t. theme, numbers, groups, context & time in year

LOW COST

TEA Lead constant

Planning & examples feed forward to next event

Uses HEI data



Want to know more . . .
Fancy a play in a Sandpit?

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reach
Excellence
Alliance

[https://www.unialliance.ac.uk/
teaching-excellence-alliance/](https://www.unialliance.ac.uk/teaching-excellence-alliance/)