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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Great Teaching, Inspired Learning

Evaluation of School Leadership initiatives

Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation

Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation

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Executive summary

Great Teaching, Inspired Learning (GTIL) is the NSW Government's plan to improve the quality of teaching in NSW schools. This evaluation report focuses on three key reforms under GTIL that aim to support leadership growth among existing, new and aspiring leaders:

1. The NSW Public School Leadership and Management Credential (GTIL Action 15.3)
2. The Leadership Development Initiative (GTIL Actions 14.1 and 14.2)
3. The Principal, School Leadership Initiative (GTIL Action 15.2)

The evaluation was undertaken by the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation (CESE), an independent arm of the NSW Department of Education that is not involved in the implementation of GTIL.

The report is in three sections, with key findings outlined below.

Part 1: The Leadership and Management Credential (p. 10-25)

The Credential at a glance

The NSW Public School Leadership and Management Credential ('the Credential') is a series of 18 e-learning modules designed to provide new and aspiring principals with a foundational understanding of key policies, procedures and accountabilities. Since Semester 2, 2017, first-time principals have been required to complete the Credential before applying for a principal role.

The evaluation at a glance

This evaluation examined how the Credential has been implemented and its impact on the understanding, capabilities and confidence of new and aspiring school leaders. To evaluate the Credential, CESE surveyed a sample of individuals who had completed the Credential, and also interviewed a sample of Directors, Public Schools NSW.

Key findings

Overall, the Credential is considered to be a valuable resource for new and aspiring principals, and provides useful information for effectively leading and managing a school.

- Most candidates feel that the topics covered by the Credential are interesting and relevant to their day-to-day role.
- Candidates generally feel that the Credential has increased their knowledge of and capabilities and confidence in relevant polices, processes, and procedures.
- Candidates also reported additional benefits of the program such as building collegial professional relationships and using the Credential material as an ongoing resource.

The most popular modules tended to reflect the core responsibilities and interests of many candidates in terms of leading learning and teaching in schools. They also tended to be ones where candidates had limited prior knowledge and therefore felt that they gained valuable new information.

The modules that were perceived as the most difficult were described as having challenging assessment components with complex questions. They also tended to be ones where candidates felt that they needed more prior knowledge.

Candidates reported three main issues with the Credential:

- *Time* – It was difficult for many candidates to find time to complete the Credential. Many candidates completed the Credential while also juggling the demands of a first-time principal role. Time may become less of an issue now that candidates are required to complete the Credential prior to applying for a first time principal role.

- *Existing knowledge* – Many candidates claimed that they already knew most of the information in the Credential, and some queried whether they could receive credit for prior learning. Program administrators had previously implemented a trial where they allowed candidates to access the assessment components without having to complete the pre-readings or e-learning components. However, this resulted in a large number of candidates taking the same assessments multiple times, and selecting different answers until they achieved the required 100 per cent correct.
- *Accuracy* – Many candidates were convinced that some of the modules contained incorrect answers. It is likely that candidates have received conflicting information surrounding the answers to some assessment components. Program administrators meet regularly with policy owners within the department to ensure that the Credential is accurate and up-to-date.

Part 2: The Leadership Development Initiative (p. 26-53)

The LDI at a glance

The Leadership Development Initiative (LDI) is a program designed to enhance instructional leadership knowledge and capabilities among aspiring and current school leaders. Participants in the LDI are supported by mentors to develop their instructional leadership skills, while working towards higher accreditation at Highly Accomplished or Lead teacher level.

The evaluation at a glance

This evaluation examined how the LDI has been implemented, its impact on instructional leadership capabilities of participants and mentors, and its impact on the understanding and use of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*. To evaluate the LDI, CESE undertook surveys and interviews with a range of stakeholders, including a sample of participants, mentors and principals at schools where staff had been involved in the LDI.

Key findings

Overall, the evaluation found that the LDI is a valuable program that is working well for many participants and mentors. Participants are especially pleased with the development of their instructional leadership skills, which is consistent with the aims of the program.

The experience of participating in the LDI has also improved over time, with more positive feedback from Lead participants in 2017 than in 2016. A number of changes were made to the program in 2017, the most notable of which was a selection panel who assessed expressions of interest. The program administrators felt that this allowed them to select the most appropriate people into the LDI. Further, while there were two LDI conferences in 2016, this increased to three in 2017. Additionally, in 2017, the LDI project was more structured, and more time was devoted to project planning and training of mentors. Together, these factors are likely to have contributed to the increased satisfaction and benefits seen in the 2017 Lead cohort.

The LDI has enhanced the instructional leadership capabilities of both participants and mentors. The LDI conferences were perceived as very beneficial, and participants and mentors alike felt that their understanding of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* had improved as a result of the initiative. However, participants and mentors sought greater clarity surrounding the LDI overall, as well as the requirements of the LDI project. Milestones and reminders throughout the year would also help participants progress towards their goals.

The LDI appears to be working particularly well for participants and mentors in the Highly Accomplished (HA) cohort. HA participants were particularly satisfied with the amount of support they received from their mentors and the development of their instructional leadership skills. HA mentors were also particularly satisfied with the development of their coaching and mentoring skills.

One reason for the greater satisfaction among HA participants might stem from their closer physical proximity and more frequent contact with their mentors (HA participants and mentors are located in the same school, whereas Lead participants and mentors are not). Lead participants in 2016 and 2017 alike indicated low levels of satisfaction with how frequently they were in contact with their mentors, and one of the main challenges cited by the Lead cohort was the geographical location of their mentor or participant. Facilitating more frequent contact and/or considering the geographical proximity between Lead participants and mentors might be an avenue for future improvement of the program.

Lead participants and mentors disagree about the amount of support that mentors are providing: in short, participants do not feel they are receiving as much support as mentors feel they are providing. This suggests that there is room for improvement in the amount and type of support provided by mentors, or at least greater clarity about what this support looks like in practice. One possible way to address this might be to instigate a formal feedback process at intervals throughout the LDI, where participants can indicate the types of support they need the most from their mentors.

The LDI is still within two years of its first instalment, and the HA cohort had only been in place for two terms at the time of the evaluation. Like the Credential, it would be useful to re-visit these evaluation questions in the future when additional cohorts have participated in the initiative.

Part 3: The Principal, School Leadership Initiative (p. 54-59)

The PSL initiative at a glance

The Principal, School Leadership (PSL) initiative was created to enable experienced principals to support new and aspiring principals in their professional development, wellbeing and ongoing capabilities.

The evaluation at a glance

This evaluation examined the type of support required by principals, the type of support provided by PSLs, and whether principals are satisfied with the support they have received from PSLs. To explore these questions, CESE examined the relevant questions from the Principal Survey in 2016 and 2017. This survey is conducted in Term 1 each year, so the 2016 results reflect principals' experiences from 2015 to early 2016, and so on.

Key findings

Most school principals said they were aware of the PSL position and stated that they had a good understanding of the PSL role.

Principals indicated that they received support from PSLs in a variety of areas, but most frequently in relation to their school plan. This included support developing the plan, setting milestones and monitoring programs against the plan. Principals also frequently received support from PSLs in self-assessment against the School Excellence Framework. These have all been key focus areas for PSLs, and this survey data suggests they have successfully assisted many principals in these areas.

For those principals who reported receiving support from PSLs, this support was often quite substantial and generally viewed as being very helpful across a range of topic areas. Overall, PSLs were perceived by principals as a valuable source of support, alongside their Director and other principal colleagues.

PSL support could be particularly useful in helping principals use data for planning and evaluation, and supporting them to maintain a healthy work-life balance.

1. The NSW Public School Leadership and Management Credential

1.1 Background

The NSW Public School Leadership and Management Credential (hereafter the Credential) is part of the Great Teaching, Inspired Learning (GTIL) policy to recognise and share outstanding practice. It reflects GTIL action 15.3 which states:

> *New school leadership credentials will be developed to provide pathways to employment as a school leader.*

The Credential was designed to provide newly-appointed, first-time principals with consistent knowledge to effectively lead and manage their schools. This includes knowledge about the policies, processes and procedures that will assist them to meet their departmental accountabilities and perform their role as principal.

The Credential comprises 18 e-learning modules which provide a foundational understanding of key policy documents and accountabilities of principals. At the time this report was written, two of the 18 modules were temporarily unavailable. The modules contain a pre-reading component and an e-learning section, after which candidates are required to complete an assessment of the content. Some modules also contain recommended further reading.

The Credential modules are listed in Appendix A, along with a brief description of what candidates should expect from each one. To obtain the Credential, candidates must attain 100 per cent in assessments for each of the modules. The assessment is open-book and candidates may make multiple attempts.

GTIL action 15.3 states that 'school authorities could consider using the leadership credential as a requirement in applications for principal positions'. From Semester 1, 2016, principals who were appointed to the role for the first time were required to complete the Credential to ensure that they had the necessary knowledge of key policies and procedures to lead and manage a school. First-time principals, newly-appointed in 2016 were required to complete the Credential either before or within 12 months of commencing their appointment. From Semester 1, 2017, first time principals have been required to complete the Credential within three terms of their appointment. From Semester 2, 2017, first time principals are now required to complete the Credential prior to appointment. The Credential is valid for five years post completion.

1.2 Evaluation aims

The major aims of the evaluation were to:

1. Examine the extent to which new and aspiring schools leaders have completed the Credential.
2. Examine how the Credential was implemented, including:
    a. the experience of completing the Credential
    b. what is working well
    c. what could be improved
    d. any challenges associated with completing it.
3. Examine the impact of the Credential on the level of understanding, capabilities and confidence of new and aspiring school leaders in the areas covered by the Credential.

1.3 Approach

1.3.1 Survey

The Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation (CESE) developed the CESE Leadership and Management Credential Survey in order to examine the implementation and impact of the Credential. This survey asked about:

- the experience of completing the Credential
- how valuable the specific modules were perceived to be
- challenges associated with completing the Credential
- how the Credential influenced candidates' understanding, capabilities and confidence.

The survey was distributed to 322 individuals who had successfully completed all available modules by August 2017. Partial or complete responses were received from 234 individuals (a response rate of 73%).

The majority of the analysis presented in the results section is for all respondents to the survey. Some analysis has been limited to respondents who were recent (less than one year) or aspiring principals. This includes analysis relating to the Credential's impact on participants' knowledge, capabilities and confidence.

The reason for focusing this analysis is to assess impact for the group of respondents for whom the Credential will now be mandatory. Appendix A contains results on the impact of the Credential for all respondents.

1.3.2 Interviews

CESE also conducted interviews (either face-to-face or via telephone) with:

- eight individuals who had completed the Credential (five principals, one relieving principal, one assistant principal and one deputy principal)[1]
- eight Directors, Public Schools NSW.

Interviews with participants focused on:

- whether the Credential improved their knowledge of the topics covered
- whether the modules had a practical impact on their management of particular issues
- what they liked the most and least about the Credential.

Interviews with Directors focused on the impact of the Credential and whether the Credential had influenced the types of support/advice that new principals request from Directors.

Note that the results are indicative only of the experiences and perceptions of the survey respondents as opposed to those of all credential completers.

1.4 Key findings

This report presents results that address the key evaluation questions listed above. Additional results on the Credential and its impact are presented in Appendix A.

1.4.1 Summary of results

Overall, the Credential is considered to be a valuable resource for new and aspiring principals, and provides useful information for effectively leading and managing a school. Most candidates feel that the topics covered by the Credential are interesting and relevant to their day-to-day role.

Candidates feel that the Credential has increased their knowledge of and capabilities and confidence in relevant polices, processes, and procedures. Candidates also reported additional benefits of the program such as building collegial professional relationships and using the Credential material as an ongoing resource.

1 Of the interviewees, half were from primary schools and half were from secondary schools. In terms of location, six were from metropolitan schools, one was from a provincial school and one was from a very remote school.

The most popular modules tended to reflect the core responsibilities and interests of many candidates in terms of leading learning and teaching in schools. They also tended to be ones where candidates had limited prior knowledge and therefore felt that they gained valuable new information.

The modules that were perceived as the most difficult were described as having challenging assessment components with complex questions. They also tended to be ones where candidates felt that they needed more prior knowledge.

Candidates reported three main issues with the Credential:

- *Time* – It was difficult for many candidates to find time to complete the Credential. Many candidates completed the Credential while also juggling the demands of a first-time principal role. Time may become less of an issue now that candidates are required to complete the Credential prior to applying for a first time principal role.
- *Existing knowledge* – Many candidates claimed that they already knew most of the information in the Credential, and some queried whether they could receive credit for prior learning. Program administrators had previously implemented a trial where they allowed candidates to access the assessment components without having to complete the pre-readings or e-learning components. However, this resulted in a large number of candidates taking the same assessments multiple times, and selecting different answers until they achieved the required 100 per cent correct.
- *Accuracy* – Many candidates were convinced that some of the modules contained incorrect answers. It is likely that candidates have received conflicting information surrounding the answers to some assessment components. Program administrators meet regularly with policy owners within the department to ensure that the Credential is accurate and up-to-date.

1.4.2 Characteristics of staff who completed the Credential

As of July 2017, 322 individuals had completed the Credential.

Figure 1.1 shows the length of time that respondents had been in the teaching profession. Given that the Credential was designed for new and aspiring principals, it is not surprising that the majority of respondents (95%) had been teaching for more than 10 years. Just over half (54%) had been in the teaching profession for 21 years or more, 41 per cent had been in the profession for 11-20 years.

In terms of the accreditation level of respondents, most did not require accreditation (68%) at the time they completed the Credential. Of those who did have accreditation, the majority were Proficient (71%).

Figure 1.1:

Years actively working in the teaching profession of Credential completers (n=229)

Source: CESE Leadership and Management Credential Survey 2017

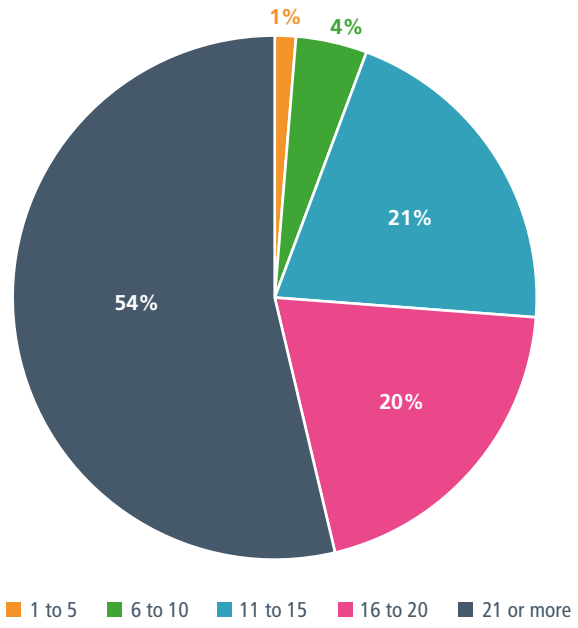


Figure 1.2 shows the school type where respondents were employed when they completed the Credential. As this figure illustrates, 60 per cent were at primary schools, 27 per cent were at secondary schools, 4 per cent were at schools for a specific purpose and 3 per cent were central schools. Approximately 6 per cent (who responded in the "other" category) were not based at a school but indicated they were in positions such as a Principal, School Leadership role.

In terms of school location, 60 per cent were at metropolitan schools, 36 per cent were at provincial schools, and three per cent were at remote or very remote schools.

Figure 1.2:

School type of Credential completers

Source: CESE Leadership and Management Credential Survey 2017

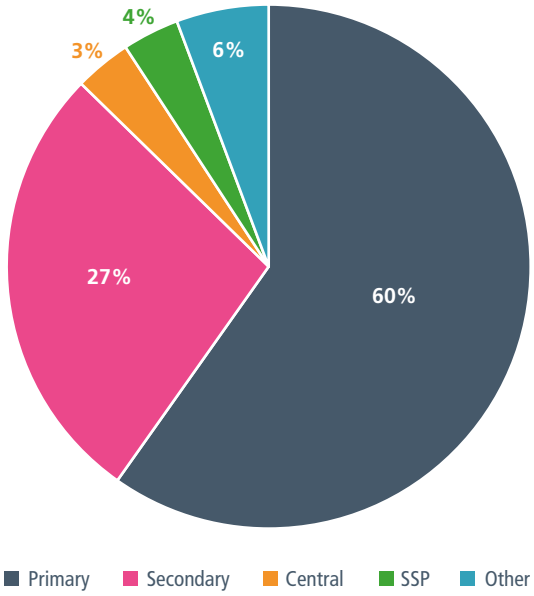
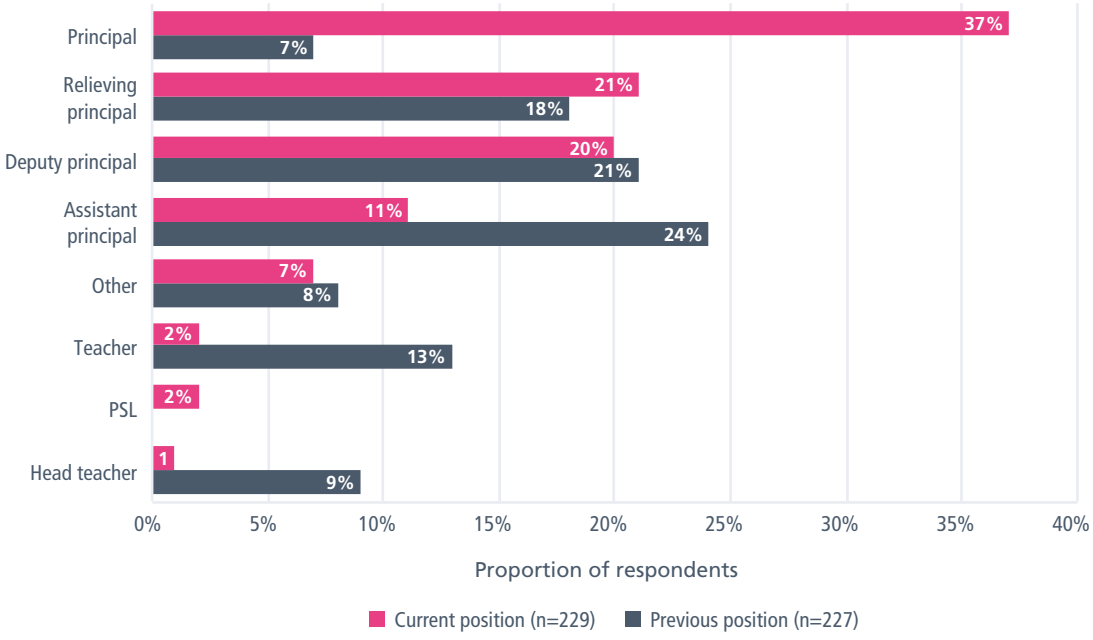


Figure 1.3 shows the current and most recent previous positions held by those who completed the survey. The most common current position was principal (84 respondents; 37%), followed by deputy principal (46 respondents; 20%) and relieving principal (45 respondents; 20%). The most common previous position was assistant principal (54 respondents; 24%), followed by deputy principal (48 respondents; 21%). Of the current principals, 43 per cent had been in the role for less than one year, and 52 per cent had been in the role for 1-5 years.

Figure 1.3:

Positions held by staff who completed the Credential

Source: CESE Leadership and Management Credential Survey 2017



Survey respondents were asked to explain why they had completed the Credential. The main reasons they gave were:

- to increase their knowledge of the topics covered by the credential (120 respondents; 51%)
- to increase their knowledge of principal accountabilities (105 respondents; 45%)
- to increase their knowledge of relevant policy requirements (104 respondents; 44%)
- to apply for a first time principal role (102 respondents; 44%)
- to increase their knowledge of departmental procedures (101 respondents; 43%).

Five interviewees said that they completed the Credential because it was a requirement for school principals and two said that they completed it to enhance their own professional development. When asked what they hoped to gain by completing the Credential, four interviewees commented that it was a good learning opportunity and two said that it was a useful "one stop shop" for key information about the principal role.

1.4.3 The experience of completing the Credential

Expectations

Interviewees were asked if the content of the Credential aligned with what they expected. In response, five commented that it was what they had expected but three said they were convinced that there had been errors in the assessment components. It appears that some candidates received misinformation from some departmental sources about the correct answers to some of the assessment questions. The Credential program administrators report that they have a rigorous process for ensuring that the answers to their assessments components are accurate and up-to-date. This involves working closely with the relevant divisions who have helped develop each module and regularly revising modules to reflect policy changes.

Given the prevalence of this misinformation, it is important that candidates are advised that the most accurate information can be obtained by contacting the relevant policy owners within the department, and not 'the grapevine'.

Relevance and interest

Survey respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with the following statements:

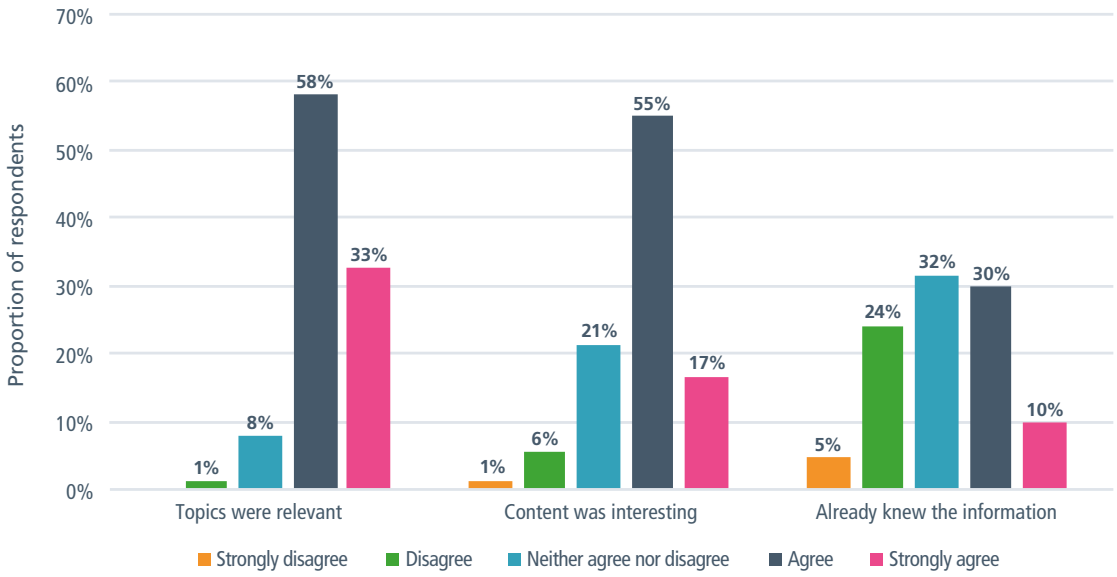
- The topics were relevant
- The content was interesting
- I already knew most of the information in the Credential.

Figure 1.4 displays responses to these three statements, and shows that most respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the topics were relevant (91%) and the content was interesting (72%). However, there was more variation in the extent to which people claimed to have already known most of the information in the Credential. In this instance, 40 per cent agreed or strongly agreed that they already knew most of the information.

Figure 1.4:

Respondents who agreed with each statement (n=215)

Source: CESE Leadership and Management Credential Survey 2017



Most engaging modules

Survey respondents were asked to select the three modules that they found 'most engaging'. For each module that respondents selected, they were asked to provide optional comments on why they found that module engaging. The three top modules selected were:

1. Leading learning and teaching (59 respondents; 25%).
   Of the 44 reasons provided about why this was engaging, the top reasons included:
   a. Highly relevant to day-to-day job (11 respondents)
   b. Interesting content (nine respondents)
   c. Reflected core business (seven respondents).

   "This is the core of what we do…to be an instructional leader is something all principals strive to be." - Survey respondent

   "This is the passion I want to pursue." - Survey respondent

   "This is what drives our daily jobs." - Survey respondent

2. School excellence (51 respondents; 22%).
   Of the 38 reasons provided about why this was engaging, the top reasons included:
   a. Highly relevant to day-to-day job (16 respondents)
   b. Interesting content (nine respondents).

   "It was beneficial to the discussions I am having with the executive team at the moment." - Survey respondent

   "It confirmed we were underway in correctly linking the school plan, strategic directions, and school excellence framework across our school." - Survey respondent

3. Core legal issues (44 respondents; 19%).
   Of the 36 reasons provided about why this was engaging, the top reasons included:
   a. Interesting scenarios (16 respondents)
   b. An important topic (five respondents).

   "Interesting portfolios, well written modules and the questions related really well to the assessments." - Survey respondent

   "Important information … an area that always needs deeper consideration." - Survey respondent

Most valuable modules

Survey respondents were also asked to select the three modules that they found to be 'most valuable'. For each module that they chose, they were asked to provide optional comments about what made the module valuable. The top three modules were:

1. Asset management (79 respondents; 34%)
   Of the 67 reasons provided about why this was valuable, the top reasons included:
   a. Limited prior knowledge in this area (18 respondents)
   b. Improved understanding of this topic (12 respondents)
   c. Well structured module with clear information (10 respondents).

   "I have had little exposure to this aspect previously and my knowledge improved considerably as a result." - Survey respondent

   "I was unaware of many of the policies and extra services available." - Survey respondent

   "This has always been a confusing area for me and it provided much needed clarity." - Survey respondent

2. Core legal issues (77 respondents; 33%)
   Of the 65 reasons provided about why this was valuable, the top reasons included:
   a. Improved understanding of this topic (15 respondents)
   b. Relevant to day-to-day job (10 respondents)
   c. Covered valuable information (nine respondents).

   "Clarified some areas for me around sensitive/tricky issues." - Survey respondent

   "Helped me better understand my legal responsibilities." - Survey respondent

   "A very thorough module that will support principals in this area. Lots of good scenarios and links." - Survey respondent

3. Strategic financial management (65 respondents; 28%)
   Of the 55 reasons provided about why this was valuable, the top reasons included:
   a. Limited prior knowledge in this area (six respondents)
   b. Improved understanding of this topic (six respondents)
   c. Covered valuable information (four respondents).

   "This was an area that I did not have much experience in." - Survey respondent

   "With the introduction of LMBR and with principals having more autonomy, I think it is very important to have a really good idea about how to strategically manage funds within a department school." - Survey respondent

Least valuable modules

Survey respondents were also asked to select the three modules that they found the 'least valuable'. For each module that they indicated was least valuable, they were asked to provide optional comments about why the module was least valuable. The modules that were selected as least valuable and the reasons were:

1. Ethical decision making (47 respondents; 20%)
   Of the 39 reasons provided about why this was least valuable, the top reasons included:
   a. Already had a good understanding of this topic (16 respondents)
   b. The module was merely common sense (7 respondents)
   c. Problems associated with the assessment (5 respondents).

   "The code of Conduct is delivered annually so I felt this was an area that is already embedded in schools." - Survey respondent

   "Common sense and not new learning." - Survey respondent

   "The content did not lend itself to the assessment. Complexities exist in this area which are often extremely subjective and context specific." - Survey respondent

2. Wellbeing for Learning (46 respondents; 20%)
   Of the 34 reasons provided about why this was least valuable, the top reasons included:
   a. Already had a good understanding of this topic (18 respondents)
   b. Content was too easy (4 respondents).

   "Each school is unique – can't make this generalised. Different needs for different schools." - Survey respondent

   "I already had a very sound knowledge in this area." - Survey respondent

3. Work health and safety (42 respondents; 18%)
   Of the 40 reasons provided about why this was least valuable, the top reasons included:
   a. Already had a good understanding of this topic (18 respondents)
   b. Content was too easy (4 respondents).

   "The assessment was repetitive of online training we are already required to do." - Survey respondent

   "It was too easily completed." - Survey respondent

Assessments

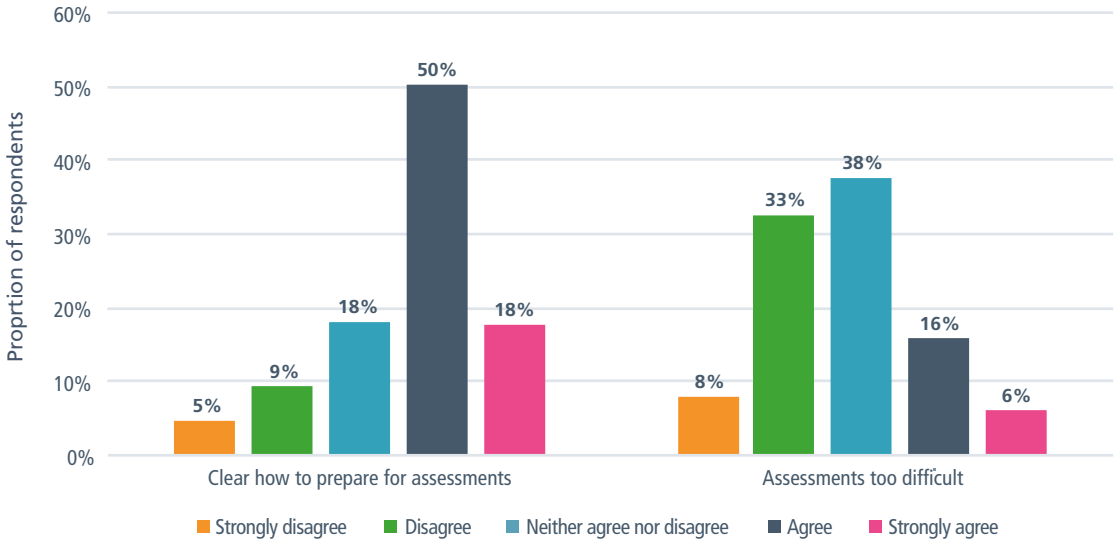
Survey respondents were asked about the extent to which they agreed that 'It was clear how to prepare for the assessments' and 'The assessments were too difficult'.

As displayed in Figure 1.5, 68 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it was clear how to prepare for the assessments. Further, only 22 per cent agreed or strongly agreed that the assessments were too difficult. This indicates that most respondents understood how to prepare for the assessments and did not find them excessively difficult.

Figure 1.5:

Preparing for and completing assessments (n=215)

Source: CESE Leadership and Management Credential Survey 2017

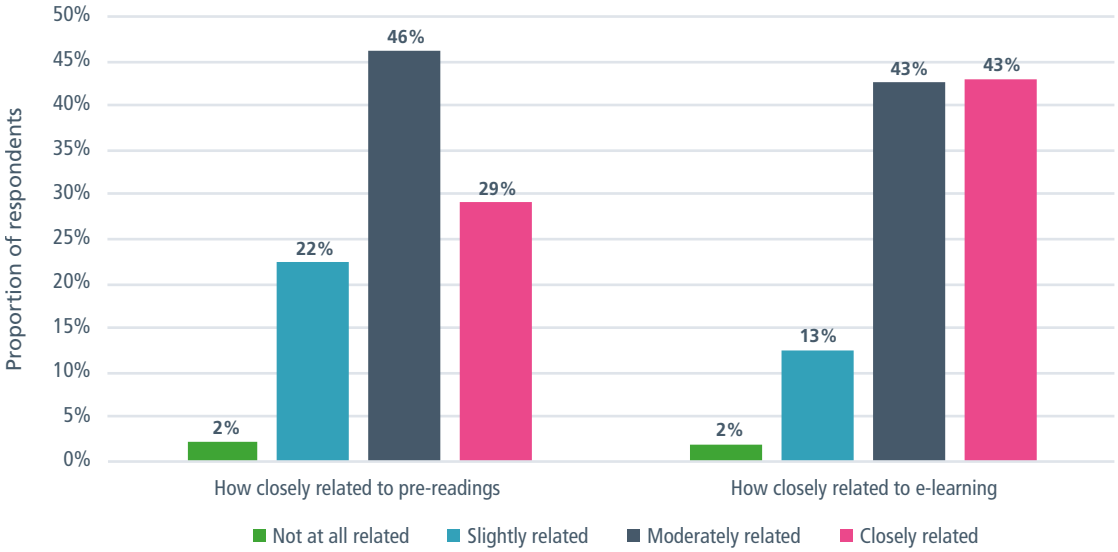


The survey also asked how closely the assessments were related to the pre-readings and to the e-learning components. As illustrated in Figure 1.6, 75 per cent of respondents felt that the assessments were moderately or closely related to the pre-readings and 86 per cent of respondents felt that the assessments were moderately or closely related to the e-learning components.

Figure 1.6:

How closely assessments were related to pre-readings and e-learning (n=223)

Source: CESE Leadership and Management Credential Survey 2017



Aspects that were liked the most

Interviewees were asked what they liked the most about the Credential. They listed a number of aspects as outlined below:

- Four Credential candidate interviewees liked the professional learning that the Credential provided.

> *"I liked finding out things I didn't know… I feel like I'm more knowledgeable. And I suppose for me, I want to make sure that I know the answers. I think people really want to know that the principal knows what they're doing. Otherwise people start worrying about their job security." - Credential candidate interview*

> *"I think it's a good idea that these sorts of units now need to be done prior to applying for principal jobs." - Credential candidate interview*

- Two Credential candidate interviewees liked the structure of the Credential especially being able to complete the modules separately and the self-paced nature of the Credential.

  "I liked the fact that each module is standalone… with my execs, I said, "Set yourself a goal of doing three modules a term." And they could do that. And they could do it in whatever order suited them at the time. So if there was an issue about staff performance, they could do that module. And it worked with what they were doing." - Credential candidate interview

- Two interviewees liked being able to use the Credential as a helpful resource in their principal role.

  "It provided a resource for me of policy. And I find that actually sourcing policy on the department's labyrinth of websites is often extremely difficult." - Credential candidate interview

Additionally, one interviewee liked the scenarios within the Credential modules and another liked using the Credential as a tool for self-reflection.

1.4.4 Challenging aspects of the Credential

Most difficult modules

Survey respondents were asked to select the three modules that they found the most difficult. For each module that they selected, they were asked to provide optional comments on why they found that module difficult. The three most commonly selected modules here were:

1. Asset management (87 respondents; 37%)
   Of the 65 reasons provided about why this was difficult, the top reasons included:
   a. Problems associated with the assessment – the questions did not seem to reflect the readings or e-learning components (28 respondents)
   b. Complex content (11)
   c. Requiring prior knowledge (nine).

   "The answers weren't easy to find and seemed to need a lot of prior knowledge." - Survey respondent

   "The assessment did not seem to fit with the module content." - Survey respondent

   "There were complex questions and a great deal of information to digest." - Survey respondent

2. Industrial relations (53 respondents; 23%)
   Of the 41 reasons provided about why this was difficult, the top reasons included:
   a. Problems associated with the assessment (11 respondents)
   b. Requiring prior knowledge (10)
   c. Difficult pre-readings (five).

   "I am just lacking prior knowledge and found it difficult to interpret the questions." - Survey respondent

   "Some questions were worded in a tricky manner." - Survey respondent

   "It was a real slog to get through the pre-readings." - Survey respondent

3. Procurement (52 respondents; 22%)
   Of the 34 reasons provided about why this was difficult, the top reasons included:
   a. Problems associated with the assessment (13 respondents)
   b. Not finding the content to be interesting (five)
   c. Requiring prior knowledge (five).

   "Some of the module content didn't specifically address the questions." - Survey respondent

   "Some confusing questions." - Survey respondent

   "The content was a bit dry." - Survey respondent

Aspects that were liked the least

Interviewees were also asked what they liked the least about the Credential. They identified a number of aspects as outlined below:

- Two interviewees did not like the lack of consistency across the assessments. They found some assessments (e.g. ethical decision making) significantly more difficult and onerous than others.

  "I thought some of the assessment was kind of a bit onerous in some ways … for some of the modules, the assessments were quite a straight forward assessment of your understanding. In other modules - the one that springs to mind was the ethical decision making - the assessment was quite convoluted." - Credential candidate interview

- One interviewee did not like the lack of feedback that was provided when they had selected an incorrect answer.

  "If you get them wrong a few times, you just change the order, but it doesn't actually give you a learning opportunity. And I thought – inbuilt into that would be really good if there were learning opportunities." - Credential candidate interview

- Two interviewees experienced technical difficulties when completing the Credential. These included links that did not work and certificates that would not print.

  "I started to take a photo of the screen when it got ten out of ten correct … then I tried to get my certificate and it said I couldn't because I hadn't completed the modules. And I rang and they said, no, because you haven't completed this module, that module, and that one. And I said, I have, and it was where all my fears came true." - Credential candidate interview

Time required

Survey respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with the following statements:

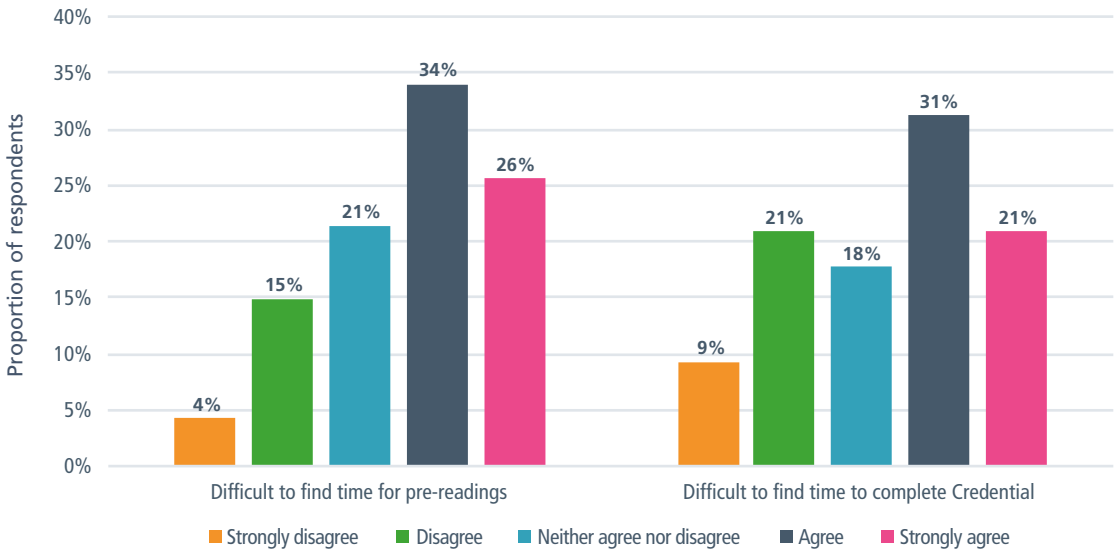
- It was difficult to find time to complete the pre-readings.
- It was difficult to find time to complete the entire Credential.

Figure 1.7 shows responses to these statements. The time needed for various aspects of the Credential appeared to be one of the main challenges associated with it. Sixty percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that it was difficult to find time to complete the pre-readings. Similarly, 52 per cent agreed or strongly agreed that it was difficult to find time to complete the entire Credential.[2]

Figure 1.7:

Time required to complete readings and Credential (n=215)

Source: CESE Leadership and Management Credential Survey 2017



2 These proportions are similar for current principals and aspiring principals.

Two interviewees also made comments about the amount of time it took to complete the Credential. They noted that principals are already extremely busy in their roles and that the Credential had added further stress and pressure. One interviewee made the following comments about how the Credential had added to a workload that was already stressful:

> *"We recognise principals' workloads are insane, we know that the pressure levels and the stress levels are higher than anything else … so they say all this stuff, but you don't see it translated … we keep getting things put on to our workload, but nothing gets taken away."*
> *- Credential candidate interview*

Given that first-time principals are now required to complete the Credential before applying for a principal role, new principals will no longer be completing the Credential on top of their principal duties.

1.4.5 Improvements suggested by candidates

Interviewees were asked how the Credential could be improved. Their suggestions included:

- Provision of all readings and information as one package. (It is worth noting that within the Credential, there is a link provided that directs Candidates to the policy document which is updated as required. This makes it difficult to provide all of the readings and information as one package).
- Feedback following an incorrect assessment response. One candidate suggested that this could involve directing them towards particular sources of information, rather than specific feedback for each candidate.
- An audio version of the written materials so that they could multi-task while listening. (Because written materials are updated as policies are changed, this would require the audio version to be updated each time).
- More case studies and scenarios in the module content. One candidate suggested more scenarios around having difficult conversations with staff and parents. Another suggested more scenarios that did not necessarily have a positive outcome.

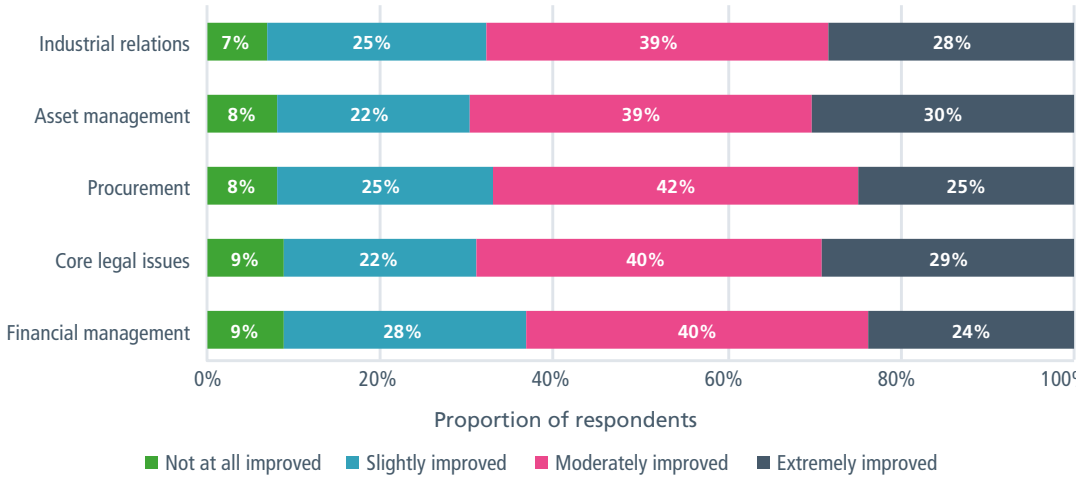
1.4.6 Impact on knowledge, capabilities and confidence

Knowledge

Survey respondents were asked to indicate how much the Credential improved their understanding of the topics covered by each module. The results presented here are limited to those candidates who had been a principal for less than one year or who were aspiring principals, in order to gauge the Credential's impact on this key group. Figure 1.8 illustrates the top five areas where understanding had at least slightly improved, from Industrial Relations (93%) to Financial Management (91%).[3]

Figure 1.8:
Impact on understanding – new and aspiring principals (n=166)

Source: CESE Leadership and Management Credential Survey 2017



3 See Appendix A, Figure A1 for the improvement in understanding across all modules for all respondents.

Areas where understanding was reported to have improved the least included:

- Managing complaints (n=80)[4] – 23 per cent indicated no improvement
- School excellence (n=166) – 18 per cent
- Ethical decision making (n=166) – 18 per cent.

Interviewees were asked whether they felt they already had sufficient knowledge in any of the areas covered by the Credential. Seven of the eight interviewees believed that in some areas they already had sufficient knowledge. These areas were:

- Performance and development
- Work health and safety
- Staffing in NSW Public Schools
- Wellbeing for learning
- Engaging and working with the community.

Directors were very positive about the Credential and the knowledge it provided to new and aspiring principals. When asked how it would help new principals transition to their role, one Director said:

> *"I think you'd be feeling you've got something extra in your kit bag. Starting work tomorrow as a new principal and I've now got this knowledge in my kit bag in terms of the operational side of things and the management side of things." - Director interview*

Another Director noted that the Credential was useful for self-reflection and allowed new and aspiring leaders to identify areas where they needed more knowledge. This Director said:

> *"They will tell me which ones they're bombing out in … it's making them become reflective of their own practice and what they know and areas they need to grow in. We tap into that - "What are some areas you need to grow in? What can I assist you further with?" So, I think the role of the Director and the relationship with the principal is still critical because it's where we discuss areas for development, areas of strength and where the growth has occurred in terms of their own professional leadership." - Director interview*

Capabilities

Survey respondents were asked how often they had put into practice their knowledge in the areas covered by each module. For each module in which respondents had put their knowledge into practice, they were asked how much the Credential had improved their capabilities in that area. Results presented here are limited to those candidates who had been a principal for less than one year or who were aspiring principals, in order to gauge the Credential's impact on this group.

Figure 1.9 illustrates the top five areas where capabilities had at least slightly improved.[5] These areas are:

- Core legal issues (95% indicated improved skill)
- Industrial relations (92%)
- Procurement (92%)
- Performance improvement (91%)
- Financial management (91%).

Areas where capabilities had improved the least included:

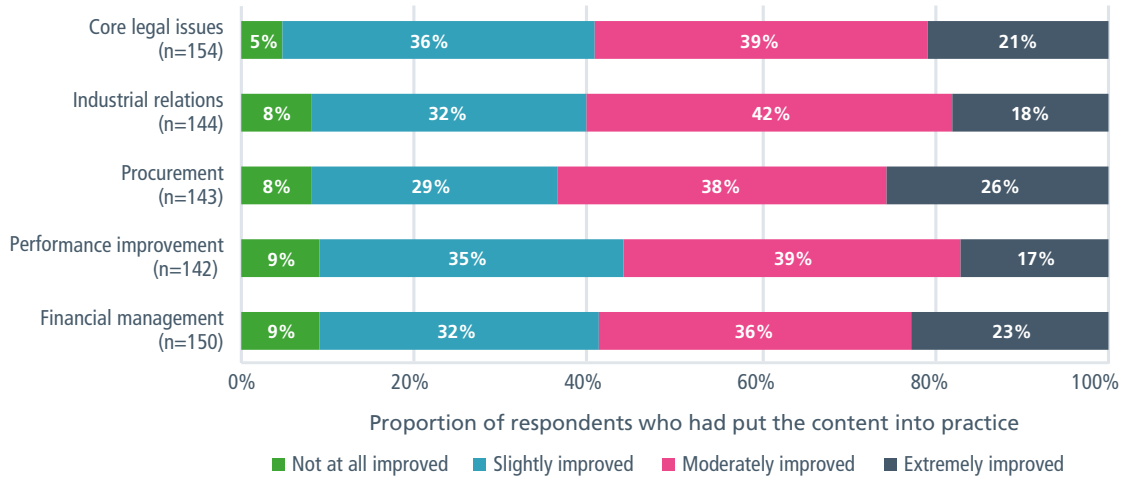
- Ethical decision making (n=155) – 16 per cent indicated no improvement
- Managing complaints (n=58) – 16 per cent
- Engaging and working with the community (n=157) – 15 per cent.

4 This module was not completed by all participants as it was offline for periods of time during the study period.
5 See Appendix A, Figure A2, for the improvement in capabilities across all modules for all respondents.

Figure 1.9:

Impact on capabilities – new and aspiring principals

Source: CESE Leadership and Management Credential Survey 2017



Confidence

Survey respondents also indicated how the Credential had influenced their confidence across a number of domains. Figure 1.10 illustrates these findings. Results presented here are limited to principals who had been in the job for less than one year or who were aspiring principals, in order to gauge the Credential's impact on this group.[6]

In all areas, the majority of respondents indicated that their confidence increased slightly or greatly. The top three areas where confidence at increased were:

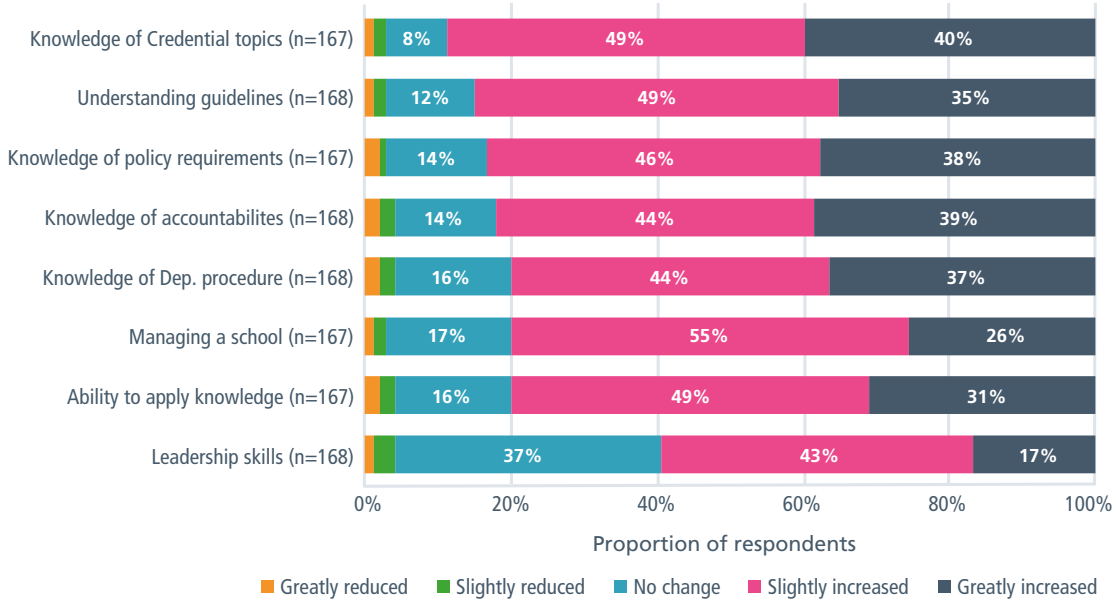
- knowledge of Credential topics (89%)
- understanding guidelines (84%)
- knowledge of policy requirements (84%).

Leadership skills were the one area in which candidates were less inclined to report growth in confidence as a result of the Credential (60% increased, 37% no change). (Figure 1.10).

Figure 1.10:

Impact on confidence – new and aspiring principals

Source: CESE Leadership and Management Credential Survey 2017



6 See Appendix A, Figure A3, for the impact on confidence for all respondents.

Survey respondents indicated how confident they felt about managing and leading a school, both before and after completing the Credential. Ratings from 'not at all confident' to 'extremely confident' are shown in Figures 1.11 (managing a school) and 1.12 (leading a school).

Figure 1.11:

Impact on confidence managing a school

The total percentage on this figure does not add up to 100% because some of the percentages have been rounded up.

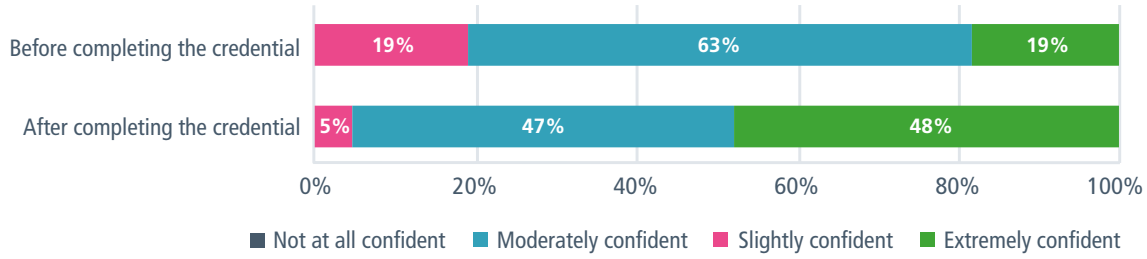
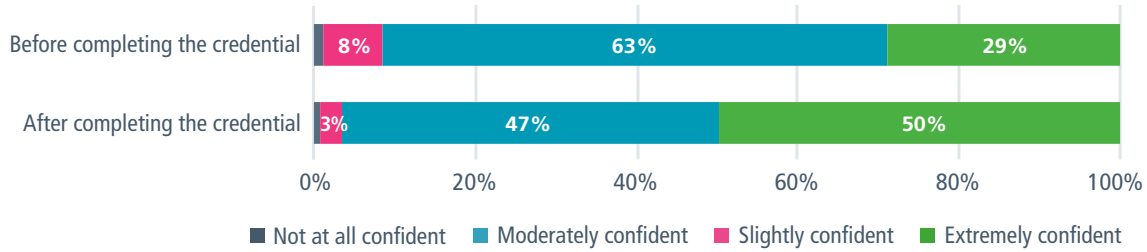


Figure 1.12:

Impact on confidence leading a school

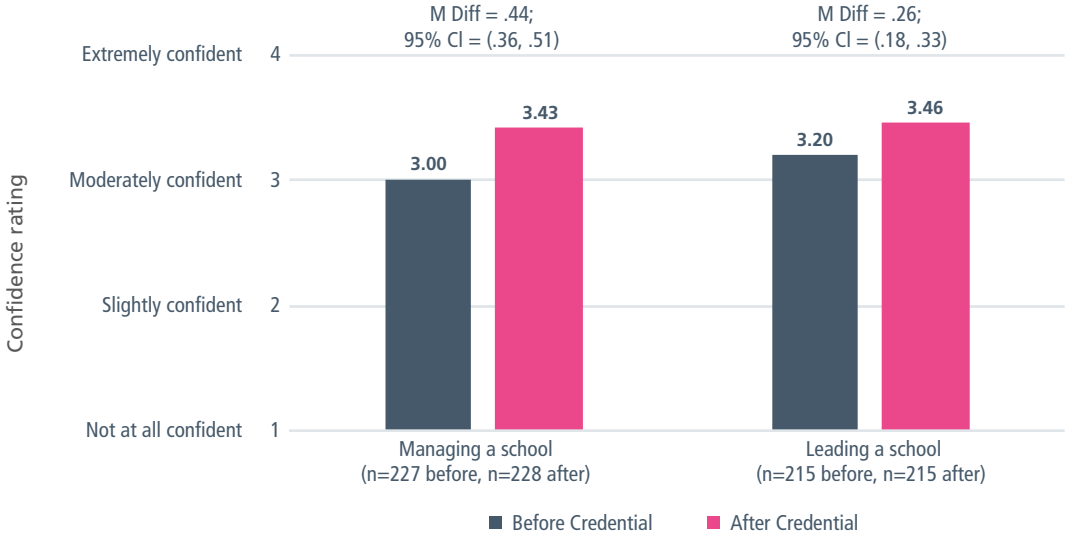


Further testing identified a statistically significant uplift between responses before and after completing the credential. This was true for both managing a school ($p < .01$) and leading a school ($p < .01$).

Figure 1.13:

Confidence leading and managing a school

Source: CESE Leadership and Management Credential Survey 2017



One Director commented specifically about the impact of the Credential on the confidence of new principals, saying:

> *"Instead of them getting the job and the day after they get the job, they ring up and they say 'who changes the light bulb in the school?', it would give them greater confidence in the fact that they know what they're doing and that they don't have to rely on their boss and they don't have to ring people and all the rest." - Director interview*

1.4.7 Unexpected outcomes

Survey respondents and interviewees were asked whether the Credential had any unexpected outcomes. These are summarised below.

Developed relationships with colleagues

One unexpected outcome was that the Credential provided the opportunity for candidates to build collegial relationships and have valuable discussions with others who were also completing the Credential (13 survey respondents; 15%).

For example, one respondent said:

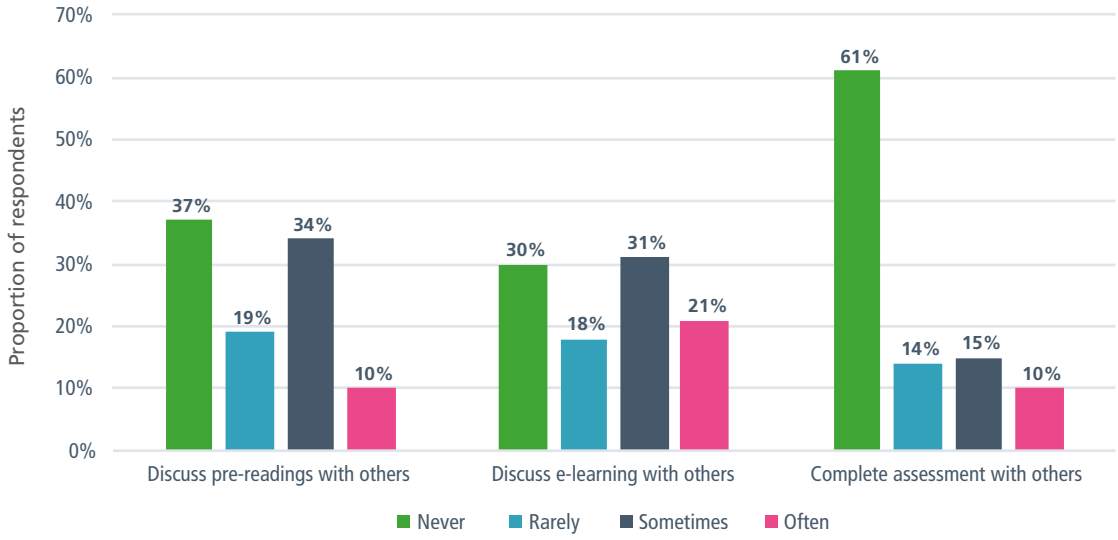
> *"I developed supportive, collegial relationships with other principals doing the Credential." - Survey respondent*

This collegiality may have developed as a result of respondents completing various aspects of the Credential with others who were also completing it. Indeed, as illustrated in Figure 1.14, 44 per cent of survey respondents discussed the pre-readings 'sometimes' or 'often' with others. Similarly, for the e-learning components, 52 per cent discussed the e-learning components sometimes or often with others and 25 per cent completed the assessment components sometimes or often with others.[7]

Figure 1.14:

Aspects of the Credential that were completed with others (n=223)

Source: CESE Leadership and Management Credential Survey 2017



In interviews, four Directors also commented about the advantages of completing the Credential modules in groups. One Director said:

> *"Our PSLs have been running workshops for aspiring principals around the modules. And so they've been doing some interesting work with groups of people, getting them together, working through a module, and that's been quite good, I've had really good feedback about that. Personally, I went to start it too and I thought, this would bore me, this is not my style of learning. In actual fact, around policy and procedures, when I work with my principals the best thing is about the conversation." - Director interview*

The Credential as an ongoing resource and as a resource for others

Another unexpected outcome was how useful the Credential has been as a resource to refer back to (11 survey respondents; 13%) or as a resource for providing professional learning to other staff (five survey respondents; 6%).

Respondents said:

> *"The repository of documents is my 'go to' when I have a question rather than trying to sift through the intranet." - Survey respondent*

> *"The presentations are really useful to present to executives." - Survey respondent*

One risk of this is the static nature of printed documents in a dynamic context where policies can and do change.

7 These proportions are similar if those who have been a principal for more than one year are excluded from the analysis.

Three interviewees did not like the Credential being targeted towards principals. One of these interviewees said that, under a distributed leadership approach, many of the Credential modules were relevant to the entire leadership team.

> *"You could do something similar for classroom teachers, for beginning head teachers, for beginning deputies. And for that matter, even Directors. You know, because I don't think Directors have to do these sorts of things, and they're moving from being a principal into a position that they've never been in before either. So if it's good for the goose, it's got to be good for the gander." - Credential candidate interview*

Survey respondents were asked how often they referred to resources from the Credential. Findings indicated that:

- 34 respondents (16%) refer back to the Credential often
- 129 respondents (60%) refer back sometimes
- 36 respondents (17%) refer back rarely
- 16 respondents (7%) never refer back.

Six survey respondents (7%) also commented that the Credential helped them realise that there were things they did not know about leading and managing a school. For instance, one respondent said:

> *"It did at times make you question yourself and make you realise that you did not always know the answers." - Survey respondent*

Together, these findings suggest that many candidates view the Credential as a valuable resource that has ongoing utility.

1.5 Concluding comments

Findings in the process component of the evaluation indicate that the Credential is a well-utilised resource for new and aspiring principals, with 322 candidates having completed the Credential by August 2017.

Candidates value the Credential and there is some evidence to suggest the program has had an impact on their knowledge, capabilities and confidence. Additionally, some candidates have continued to use the Credential material after completion of the Credential and cited it as an important resource.

The changes to the program from Semester 2, 2017, with the Credential now a requirement for appointment as a principal, have not been specifically assessed in this evaluation. As more candidates complete the Credential over time, CESE recommends revisiting the evaluation questions in this report using the new data available. At this point, the ongoing impact of the Credential on capabilities, knowledge and confidence of new principals can be examined and evaluated. There may also be stronger evidence, based on a larger and more targeted cohort of candidates, with which to judge and make conclusions about the outcomes of this program.

2. The Leadership Development Initiative

2.1 Background

The Leadership Development Initiative (LDI) is a structured instructional leadership development program involving aspiring and current school leaders and expert mentors who provide support. The initiative is an opportunity for participants to enhance their instructional leadership knowledge, skills, and professional capabilities. The program has been designed and implemented by the Leadership and High Performance Directorate (L&HP) in the NSW Department of Education.

In 2016, the LDI involved mentors supporting participants aspiring to the Lead teacher career stage, to develop their instructional leadership practices within the framework of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*.

In 2017, the LDI continued to involve mentors supporting participants at the Lead Teacher career stage and introduced a second stream which involved mentors supporting participants at the Highly Accomplished career stage. These two components are outlined below:

LDI – Lead Teacher: Participants are current teaching principals, deputy principals, assistant principals and head teachers aspiring to higher level leadership positions. Mentors are current experienced and expert executive school leaders (principals and deputy principals) seeking to support instructional leadership development and to improve their understanding of how to identify aspiring leaders and support others to gain Lead accreditation.

The LDI aims to support these participants to undertake a Lead project, whereby they develop their instructional leadership capabilities by leading the implementation, evaluation and reporting of a section of their school plan. Participants are also encouraged to complete the department's Leadership Reflection Tool at Lead level and are asked to produce a film presentation describing their involvement in the initiative and its impact. Mentors are required to directly assist colleagues in a structured mentoring relationship and must be prepared to commit to the program for a year.

LDI – Highly Accomplished Teacher: Participants are classroom teachers aspiring to leadership positions. Mentors are current expert executive school staff (principals, deputy principals, assistant principals and head teachers) seeking to support instructional leadership development and to improve their understanding of how to identify aspiring leaders and support others to gain Highly Accomplished teacher accreditation.

The LDI aims to support these participants to undertake a Highly Accomplished project, in which they create an evidence set based on six to eight Highly Accomplished Standard Descriptors with a focus on instructional leadership. Participants are also encouraged to complete the department's Leadership Reflection Tool and produce a film presentation[8] describing their involvement in the initiative and its impact. Mentors are required to assist colleagues directly in a structured mentoring relationship and must be prepared to commit to the program for a year.

Mentors in both streams of the program are responsible for guiding the development of up to three colleagues.

A total of 292 participants and 141 mentors have been involved in the LDI over the life of the program. The number of participants and mentors in 2016 and 2017 for Lead and Highly Accomplished is indicated in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1:

LDI Participants and Mentors

Source: LDI Program Administrators, L&HP

	LDI – Lead Teacher		LDI – Highly Accomplished		LDI – Total	
	Participants	Mentors	Participants	Mentors	Participants	Mentors
2016	172	64	N/A*	N/A*	172	64
2017	61	30	59	47	120	77
Total	**233**	**94**	**59**	**47**	**292**	**141**

*N/A = no Highly Accomplished cohort in 2016

8 The film presentation was optional for participants in both years.

Participants and mentors in the 2016 cohort each received a personal grant of $5,000. In the 2017 cohort, this personal grant increased to $6,500, due to an increase in the number of LDI conferences that they were required to attend (an extra two days of coaching for everyone and an additional day of preparation for the mentors). This grant was designed to support travel, accommodation, NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) fees and casual relief. Mentors also received formal training in mentoring and coaching. Rural and remote participants were able to seek additional funding for any out of pocket travel and accommodation expenses they incurred. Interested participants were required to submit an application which was assessed by a selection panel comprising DoE L&HP representatives, NSW Primary Principals Association and Secondary Principal Council representatives, and teachers accredited at Lead and Highly Accomplished levels.

Total departmental funding for the program in 2016 was $1,343,738.

2.2 Evaluation aims

The two major aims of the LDI evaluation were:

1. To examine how the LDI has been implemented in 2016 and 2017 (i.e. a process evaluation).
2. To examine the impact of the LDI (i.e. an outcome evaluation) on the:
    a. development of instructional leadership practices of both participants and mentors
    b. understanding and use among mentors of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*
    c. capacity of mentors to support staff to gain higher accreditation
    d. higher accreditation completion rates.

2.2.1 Process evaluation aims

The specific aims of the process evaluation were to examine:

1. The extent to which current and aspiring leaders are applying for the LDI
2. The extent to which participants and mentors are receiving support under the LDI
3. The extent to which the LDI has been implemented well
4. The number of participants and mentors exiting the program early, and their reasons for doing so
5. The aspects of the initiative that are working well and those that could be improved.

2.2.2 Outcome evaluation aims

The specific aims of the outcome evaluation were to examine:

1. The number of teachers working towards Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher accreditation
2. The completion rates of those undertaking Highly Accomplished and Lead Teacher accreditation
3. The impact of the LDI on participants' instructional leadership knowledge and capabilities
4. The impact of the LDI on mentors' instructional leadership knowledge and capabilities, and on their capacity to support staff to gain higher accreditation
5. The impact of the LDI on the extent to which the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* are used and valued within a school
6. Whether there are types of mentoring or support that are more effective than others (and in what contexts)
7. Whether LDI participants continue (or intend to continue) on to higher level leadership roles
8. Whether there were any additional, unexpected outcomes from this initiative.

2.3 Approach

2.3.1 Surveys

The CESE LDI Survey

To address the evaluation aims, The Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation (CESE) developed the LDI Survey. This survey was a combination of open ended questions, multiple choice questions and ratings on likert scales. Survey questions for participants examined:

- the types of support that they have received
- their understanding of LDI requirements
- the impact of LDI support on their professional development
- their confidence in their instructional leadership practice.

Survey questions for mentors examined:

- the types of support they have provided
- their understanding of LDI requirements
- the aspects of the program that they believe to have been most effective
- the aspects of the program that could be improved.

Since mentors were assigned up to three participants each, the survey was designed so that mentors would respond with only one of their participants in mind. To do this, mentors were asked to enter the first names of all of their participants and the survey software randomly selected one name. Mentors were then asked to complete the remainder of the survey in reference to this particular participant.

The LDI Survey was distributed to 418 individuals and responses were received from a total of 249 individuals (60% response rate).

Note that the results are indicative only of the experiences and perceptions of the survey respondents as opposed to those of all participants in the program.

Table 2.2 illustrates the number of Lead and HA participants and mentors in each year who responded.

Table 2.2:
LDI Survey responses

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017

	Participants		Mentors		Withdrawn Participants		Withdrawn Mentors	
	Lead	HA	Lead	HA	Lead	HA	Lead	HA
2016	93	N/A*	37	N/A*	17	N/A*	0	N/A*
2017	39	31	15	15	0	1	0	1
Total	**132**	**31**	**52**	**15**	**17**	**1**	**0**	**1**

*N/A = no Highly Accomplished cohort in 2016

Note that these sample sizes vary for specific questions throughout the survey because respondents could skip questions or be directed away from various questions if they did not meet the applicability, and some respondents did not complete the entire survey.

The CESE Leadership and Accreditation Survey for non-LDI applicants

This evaluation also examined the experiences of teachers in NSW public schools who had commenced an application for higher accreditation without LDI support (i.e. non-LDI participants). To do this, CESE developed a Leadership and Accreditation Survey for non-LDI applicants. This survey was distributed to 38 non-LDI applicants and included all such individuals who had commenced an application for Lead accreditation since Term 1, 2016 (n=18) and all individuals who had commenced an application for Highly Accomplished accreditation since Term 1, 2017 (n=20). Information on these non-LDI applicants was supplied by NESA. The survey examined the support required by non-LDI applicants in their applications for higher accreditation.

Responses were received from eight Lead applicants (44% response rate) and 11 Highly Accomplished applicants (55% response rate).

Due to these low numbers, findings should be interpreted cautiously as these results may not be generalisable to the broader population of individuals applying for higher accreditation without the LDI.

2.3.2 Interviews

Face-to-face, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the following individuals:

- eight LDI participants including:
  - three 2016 Lead participants
  - one 2017 Lead participant
  - four 2017 HA participants
- eight LDI mentors including:
  - four 2016 Lead mentors
  - three 2016 and 2017 Lead mentors
  - one 2017 HA mentor
- five principals at schools where a staff member was involved in the LDI
- eight Directors, Public Schools NSW.

These interviews examined their experiences and perceptions of the LDI in more depth.

Interviews with participants examined:

- the types of support that were most needed
- their professional relationship with their mentors
- the types of support they received from their mentors
- the impact of the support they received on their instructional leadership skills.

Interviews with mentors examined:

- the formal training they received in mentoring
- their professional relationship with their participants
- the type of support they provided to participants
- their perceptions about the most effective type of support.

Since mentors were assigned up to three participants each, the interviewer asked mentors to think of their participants whose first name came first alphabetically. This ensured that mentors answered the survey questions in reference to a randomly selected participant.

Interviews with principals examined:

- the impact of the LDI on the instructional leadership capabilities of participants and mentors
- the extent to which the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* are valued and used throughout the school (e.g., to develop capacity of aspiring and current leaders)
- the extent to which higher accreditation is valued throughout the school.

Interviews with Directors examined:

- their knowledge of the LDI
- whether they felt the LDI had been implemented well
- the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the LDI.

This report presents results that address the key evaluation questions listed above. Additional results on the LDI program and its impact are presented in Appendix B.

2.4 Key findings – process evaluation

2.4.1 Summary of process evaluation findings

Overall, the process evaluation indicates that the Leadership Development Initiative is a valuable program that is working well for many participants and mentors. Participants are especially pleased with the development of their instructional leadership skills which is consistent with the aims of the program. However, it appears that the LDI is currently more successful for Highly Accomplished participants than for Lead participants. The results also indicate that the LDI has been more successful for the 2017 Lead cohort than for the 2016 Lead cohort, reflecting improvements in the program over time.

One reason for the greater satisfaction among Highly Accomplished participants might be due to their higher frequency of contact with their mentors. Both 2016 and 2017 Lead participants indicated that they were not very satisfied with how frequently they were in contact with their mentors. Further, one of the main challenges cited by the Lead cohort was the geographical location of their mentor or participant. Facilitating more frequent contact and/or considering the geographical proximity between Lead participants and mentors might be an avenue for future improvement of the program.

Both Lead and HA participants are receiving support from their mentors. More 2017 Lead participants felt their mentors provided them with support than their 2016 counterparts. Lead participants and mentors disagree about the amount of support that mentors are providing. In short, mentors consistently felt they are providing more support than participants felt they were receiving. This suggests that there is room for improvement in the amount and type of support provided by mentors. One possible way to address this might be to instigate a formal feedback process at intervals throughout the LDI, where participants can indicate the types of support they need the most from their mentors.

Another area where there is room for improvement is in the clarity surrounding the requirements of the LDI initiative and clarity surrounding the LDI project. Additionally, clarity surrounding the roles of both participants and mentors could also be improved. Documentation in a welcome pack for participants and mentors might be one way to address these issues and provide greater clarity.

Finally, two of the most satisfying aspects of the LDI for mentors were the LDI conferences and the development of their mentoring skills. This indicates that the benefits associated with the LDI are not limited to participants and that mentors are also gaining valuable knowledge and experience in their mentoring roles.

2.4.2 Applications and acceptances

Table 2.3 indicates the number of people who applied to be in the Leadership Development Initiative and the number and proportion who were accepted. One important thing to note here is that the Lead cohort in 2016 accepted all applicants and had participant numbers in excess of 170. In 2017, there were fewer Lead applicants (99 down from 172 in 2016) and an acceptance rate of just over three in five (62%).

Table 2.3:

Participant applications and acceptances

Source: LDI Program Administrators, Leadership and High Performance

	Lead		HA	
	Applied	Accepted	Applied	Accepted
2016	172	172 (100%)	N/A*	N/A*
2017	99	61 (62%)	133	59 (44%)

*N/A = no Highly Accomplished cohort in 2016

Of those surveyed who applied for accreditation without the LDI:

- 10 applicants (five Lead, five HA) were not aware of the LDI
- three applicants had applied to the LDI but had not been accepted
- nine were aware of the LDI but did not apply for reasons including concerns about the amount of time the LDI would involve and feeling like they already had sources of leadership support.

Reasons for applying

Participants: Survey respondents were asked why they applied to the LDI (multiple options could be selected). The main reasons selected by 2016 and 2017 Lead participants were:

- to gain accreditation at Lead level (99 participants; 75%); fifteen of these participants (12 in 2016 and three in 2017) indicated that this was the only reason they had applied
- to develop my instructional leadership skills (73 participants; 55%)
- to receive mentor support throughout the accreditation process (68 participants; 52%)
- to increase my ability to evaluate teaching practices (56 participants; 42%)
- to improve student outcomes (52 participants; 39%).

The main reasons selected by Highly Accomplished participants were:

- to gain accreditation at HA level (30 participants; 97%); five of these participants indicated that this was the only reason they had applied
- to receive mentor support throughout the accreditation process (20 participants; 65%)
- to develop my instructional leadership skills (19 participants; 61%)
- to increase my ability to evaluate teaching practices (16 participants; 52%)
- to improve student outcomes (16 participants; 52%).

During interviews, the main reasons provided by participants were similar and included:

- to gain higher accreditation (four of eight participants)
- to receive the funding associated with the LDI (three of eight participants)
- to receive mentor support (two of eight participants).

Mentors: According to the survey responses, the main reasons that mentors applied to the LDI included:

- I enjoy mentoring (42 mentors; 63%)
- mentoring is part of my duty to the profession (39 mentors; 58%)
- mentoring is rewarding (35 mentors; 52%)
- to develop my instructional leadership skills (32 mentors; 48%)
- to develop my mentoring skills (30 mentors; 45%).

During interviews, the main reasons provided by mentors included:

- to support others through higher accreditation (four of eight mentors)
- to develop leadership capacity in others (four of eight mentors)
- to give back to the profession (two of eight mentors).

2.4.3 Overall support and instructional leadership support

Participants

Participants were asked how much support they received from their mentor, both 'overall' and specifically in developing their instructional leadership skills.

As shown in Figure 2.1, Lead participants in both 2016 and 2017 feel that they received less support than HA participants. However 2017 saw an increase in the proportion of Lead participants citing moderate or substantial support. For Lead participants, 45 per cent (in 2016) and 50 per cent (in 2017) feel that they received moderate or substantial support in terms of overall support. This compares with 58 per cent of HA participants.

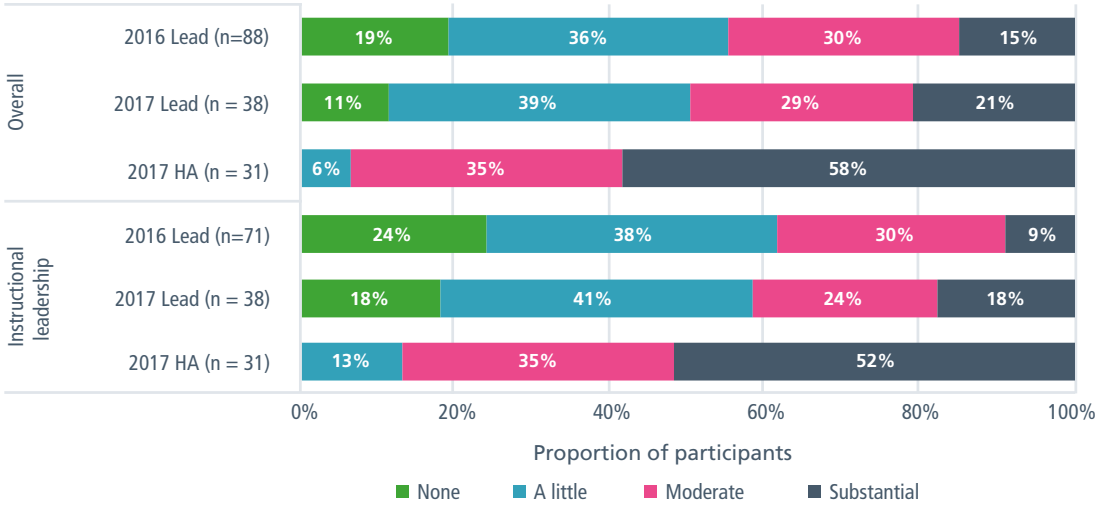
For support provided in instructional leadership, 39 per cent (in 2016) and 42 per cent (in 2017) of Lead participants feel they received moderate or substantial support. For HA participants the comparable proportion was more than double this (87%).

Figure 2.1:

Support received from mentor

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017

The total percentage on this figure does not add up to 100% because some of the percentages have been rounded up.



2.4.4 LDI project support

Participants were asked how much progress they had made on a number of tasks relevant to their LDI project. These included:

- designing your LDI project
- mapping your LDI Project to the Lead (or Highly Accomplished) Teacher standard descriptors
- implementing your LDI project
- evaluating your LDI project.

Where a participant indicated that they had completed or made progress on these four tasks, they were then asked:

- how much support they had needed (no support, little support, moderate support, substantial support)
- how much support their mentor had *provided* (on the same scale).

Mentors were also asked to indicate how much support they provided their participant for these four tasks (on the same scale).

Note that in Figures 2.2 to 2.6, the percentages shown are an aggregate of little, moderate, or substantial support.

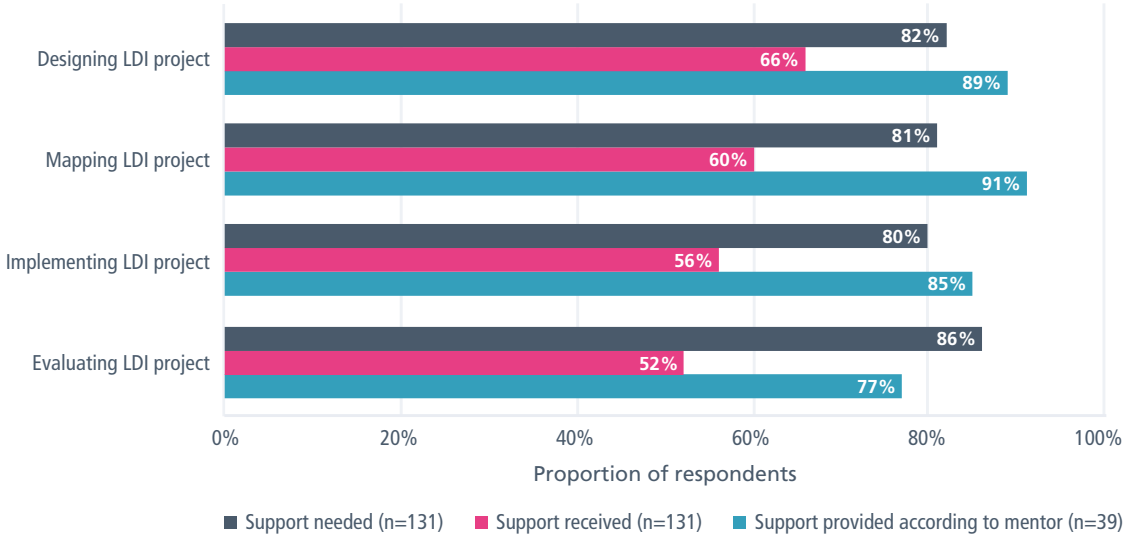
Lead participants – 2016 and 2017

Figure 2.2 illustrates the support that all Lead participants needed and received, and the support that their mentors felt they provided. Figures from both years are combined because their responses in 2016 and 2017 were similar. As illustrated in this figure, Lead participants did not feel that they were receiving as much support as they needed on all of these tasks. However, Lead mentors felt they were providing a similar amount of support to that needed by participants.

Figure 2.2:

Support related to LDI project – 2016 and 2017 Lead cohorts

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017



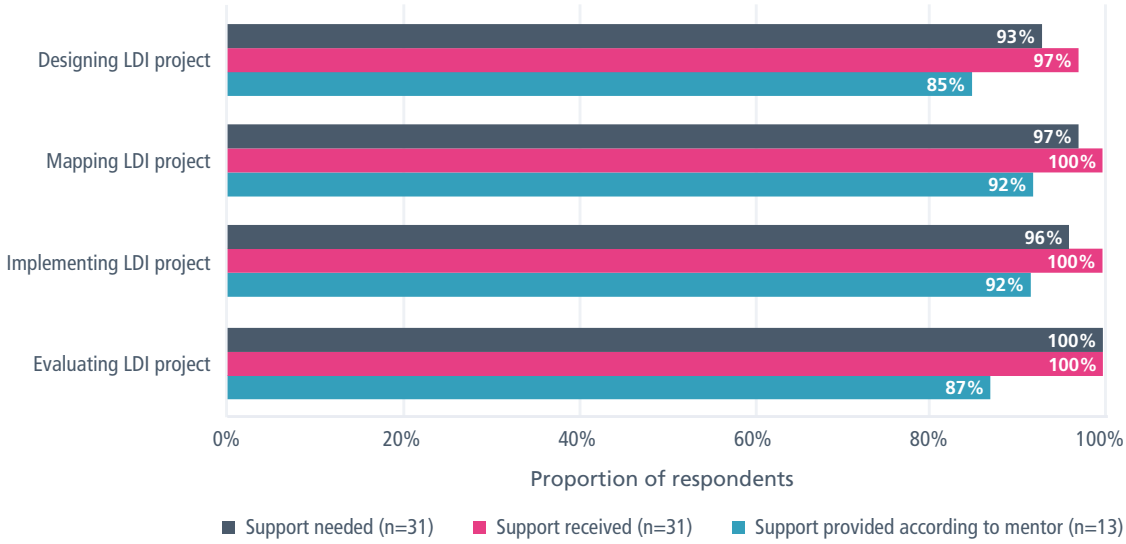
2017 Highly Accomplished participants

Figure 2.3 illustrates the support that 2017 Highly Accomplished participants needed and received, and the support that their mentors felt they provided. Note that the number of mentors in Figure 2.3 is only 13, so this proportion is likely to be volatile and should be interpreted cautiously. As shown in this figure, Highly Accomplished participants feel that the support they are receiving is consistent with the support they need. Indeed, they feel that their mentors are providing slightly more support than mentors themselves feel they are providing.

Figure 2.3:

Support related to LDI project – 2017 HA cohort

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017



2.4.5 Professional and emotional support

Participants were asked how much support they needed from their mentor in terms of:

- professional support
- emotional support
- how to effectively lead colleagues
- how to model practices for others
- how to share practices with others
- feedback on practices
- how to deliver feedback.

They also indicated the extent to which their mentor provided these types of support. Additionally, mentors indicated the extent to which they provided these types of support.

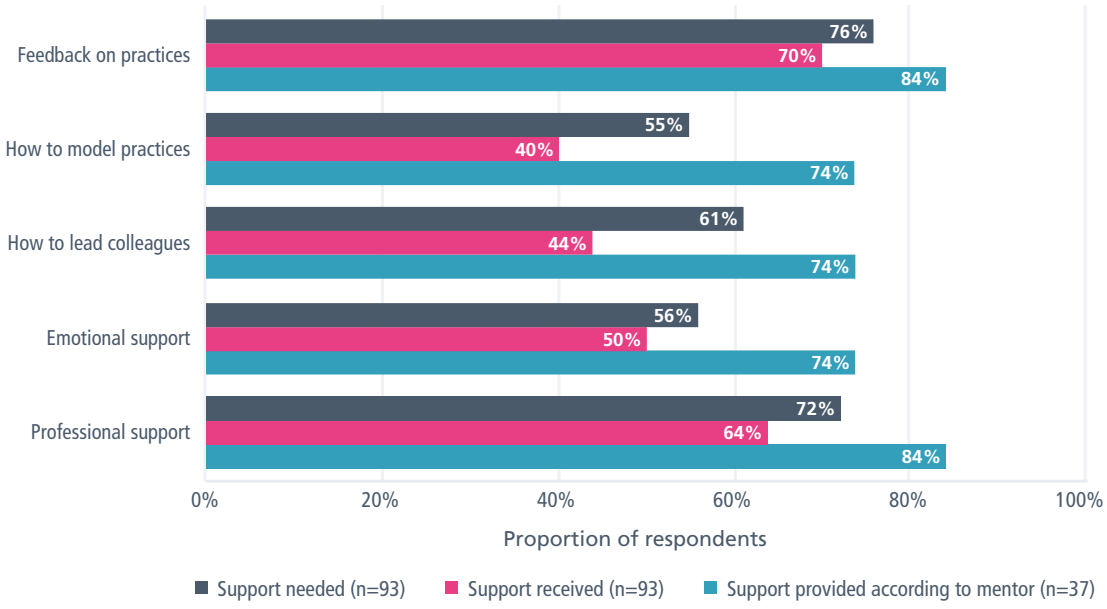
2016 Lead participants

Figure 2.4 illustrates the support that 2016 Lead participants needed and received, and the support that their mentors provided. The main areas where these participants needed support were in feedback on their practices and general professional support. These were also the main areas where these participants received support. The two areas where there was the greatest gap between support needed and received were in how to effectively lead colleagues and how to model practices for others. Across all areas, mentors feel that they are providing more support than participants feel they are receiving.

Figure 2.4:

Support during the LDI – 2016 Lead Cohort

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017



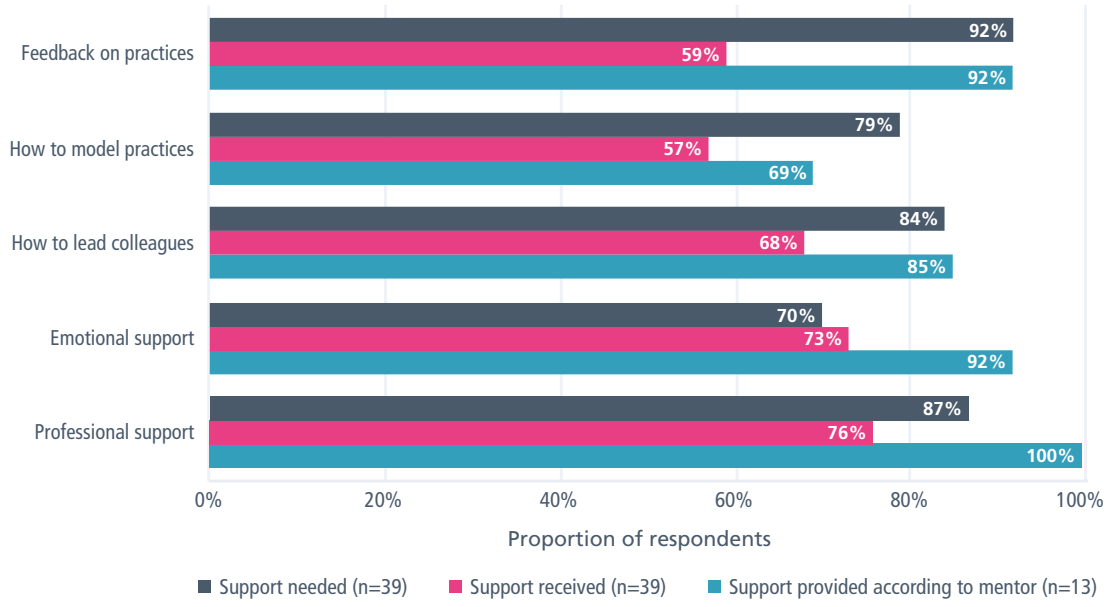
2017 Lead participants

Figure 2.5 illustrates the support needed and received according to the 2017 Lead cohort. As in 2016, the main areas where these participants needed support were in feedback on their practices and general professional support. The main areas where these participants received support were in general professional support and emotional support.

Figure 2.5:

Support during the LDI – 2017 Lead cohort

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017



The areas where there was the greatest gap between support needed and received were in feedback on practices, how to model practices for others and how to lead colleagues. Again, mentors felt that they were providing more support in all areas compared to the amount of support that participants felt they received. Note that the number of mentors in Figure 2.5 is only 13, so the mentoring data in this figure should be interpreted cautiously.

Compared to 2016, 2017 Lead participants reported needing more support in all areas. With the exception of receiving feedback on their practices, 2017 participants felt that their mentors provided more support than their 2016 counterparts had reported. In all areas except how to model practices for others, Lead mentors in 2017 felt that they were providing more support than the Lead mentors 2016 had reported.

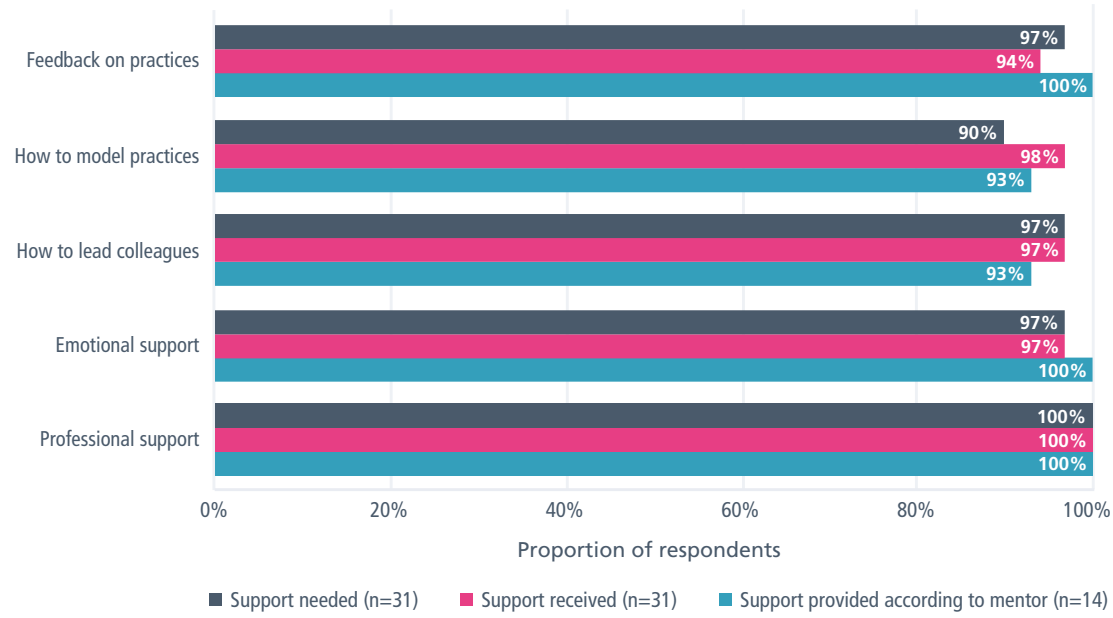
2017 HA participants

Figure 2.6 illustrates the support needed, received and provided according to the 2017 HA cohort. Over 85 per cent of these participants needed support in all of these areas. Notably, these participants also felt their mentors provided these types of support. This suggests that Highly Accomplished participants felt that the support they received was closely aligned to their needs. Further, the majority of mentors also believed that they were providing their participants with these types of support. Together, these findings indicate HA participants and mentors have similar beliefs about the types of support needed and provided during the LDI. The mentor estimate is based on 14 respondents and again should be interpreted cautiously.

Figure 2.6:

Support during the LDI – 2017 HA cohort

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017



2.4.6 Other sources of support

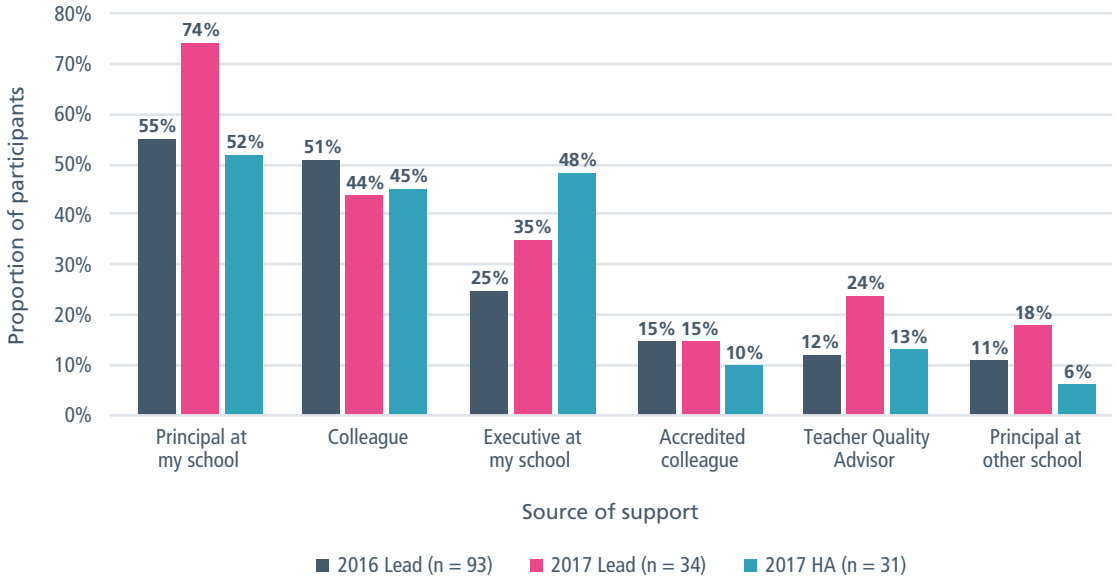
Participants

Participants also indicated if anyone other than their mentor had provided them with support. The main alternative sources of support are displayed in Figure 2.7. The most common for both Lead and HA participants was the principal at their school, followed by a colleague or a member of the executive at their school.

Figure 2.7:

Other sources of support for participants

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017



Mentors

Mentors were asked if they had received support during the LDI and if so, who they had received support from. Responses are summarised in Table 2.4.

Table 2.4:

Other sources of support for mentors

	No. mentors responding to this question	Did not receive support	Main providers of support (not exhaustive)
Lead 2016	37	15	State office (7), colleague (6)
Lead 2017	13	1	Colleague (6), principal at another school (4)
HA 2017	14	3	Principal at their own school (5)

Sources of support for those not involved the LDI

Of those who applied for higher accreditation without the LDI, their main sources of support were similar to the sources of support for LDI participants as outlined below.

Table 2.5:

Main sources of support for non-LDI candidates, by topic

	Executive at their school	Principal at their school	Colleague
Feedback on their practices	9	6	6
Model practices for others	2	2	2
Lead colleagues	9	4	2
Emotional support	4	-	2
Professional support	9	7	2

2.4.7 How well has the LDI been implemented?

Clarity of roles

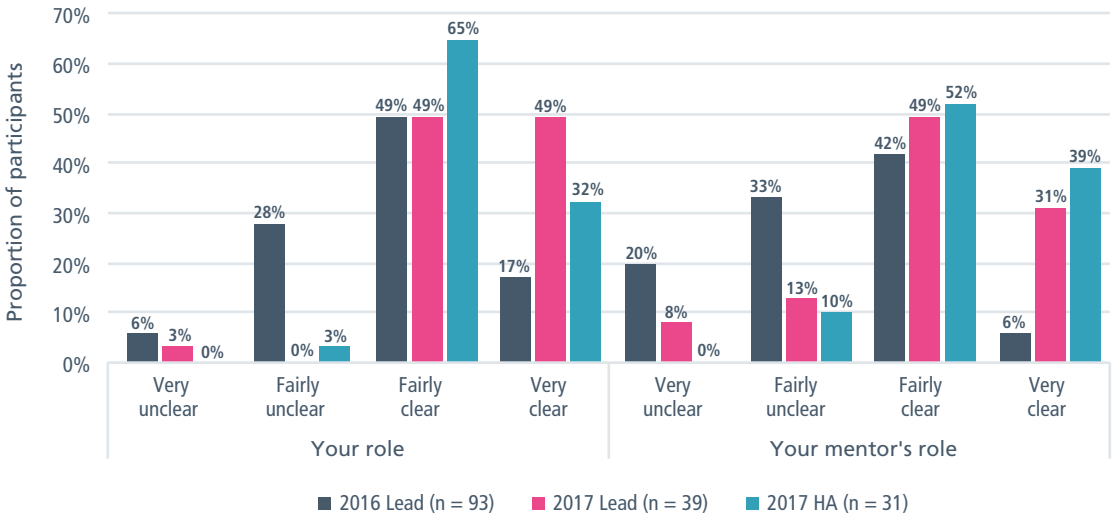
Participants: Participants were asked how clearly they understood their own role and their mentor's role. As illustrated in Figure 2.8, about one third of 2016 Lead participants were 'very unclear' or 'fairly unclear' about their role as an LDI participant. Further, about half of the 2016 Lead participants were 'very unclear' or 'fairly unclear' about their mentor's role.

However, clarity surrounding roles appears to have improved in 2017. Specifically, in 2017, only three per cent of Lead participants were 'very unclear' about their role, although 21 per cent were 'very unclear' or 'fairly unclear' about their mentor's role. Highly Accomplished participants had better clarity surrounding roles, with only three per cent unclear about their own role and 10 per cent unclear about their mentor's role.

Figure 2.8:

Clarity about roles – participant perspective

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017



Mentors: Mentors were also asked how clearly they understood their own role and their participant's role.

Of the 34 2016 Lead mentors who responded to this survey question, only one was 'fairly unclear' what their own role or the participants' role, and none were 'very unclear' about either.

- two were 'very unclear' and nine were 'fairly unclear' about their own role
- two were 'very unclear' and eight were 'fairly unclear' about their participant's role.

This situation improved in the LDI's second year. Of the 14 2017 Lead mentors who responded to this survey question, only one was 'fairly unclear' what their own role or the participants' role, and none were 'very unclear' about either.

Of the 14 2017 HA mentors who responded to this survey question one was 'very unclear' and one was 'fairly unclear' about their own role and their participant's role.

Approximately one in three 2016 Lead mentors were very unclear or fairly unclear about their role as an LDI mentor and about their participant's role. However, like 2017 Lead participants, clarity about roles appeared to improve for mentors in 2017. Nevertheless, it may be beneficial for the program administrators to provide more clarification surrounding the role of Lead mentors in particular.

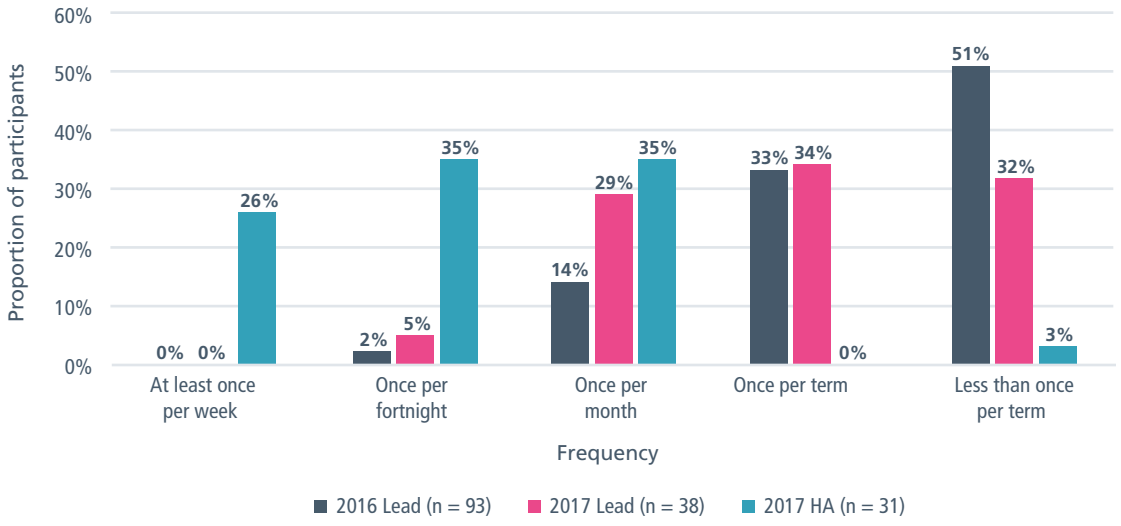
Frequency of contact

Participants: Participants also indicated how often they had contact with their mentor for the purposes of the LDI. As shown in Figure 2.9, HA participants had more frequent contact with their mentors than Lead participants. Notably, approximately two thirds of Lead participants had contact with their mentor once per term or less. This suggests that implementation of the LDI could be improved by examining ways to facilitate more frequent contact between Lead participants and mentors. This could include forms of contact that are not necessarily face-to-face, given that Lead participants and mentors are not located in the same school.

Figure 2.9:

Frequency of contact with mentor – participant perspective

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017



Satisfaction with the LDI

Participants: Participants indicated how satisfied they were with various aspects of the LDI. Examples of these aspects included:

- the time they had available to work on their LDI project
- the frequency of contact with their mentor
- the support they received
- the LDI conferences
- the development of their instructional leadership skills.

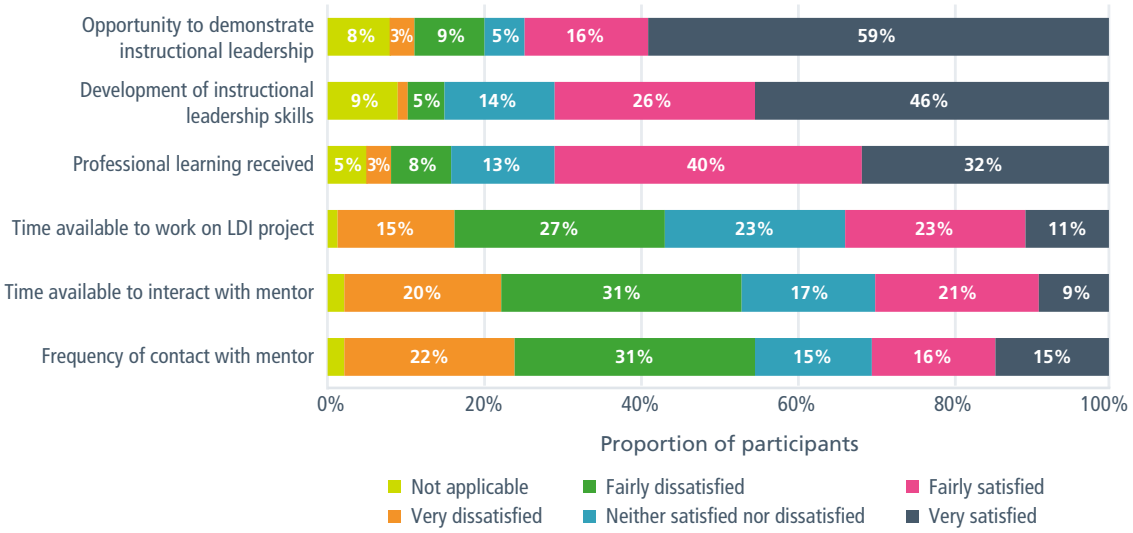
Figure 2.10 shows the results for six of these times – the top three and bottom three – according to 2016 Lead participant satisfaction. Note that participants could answer 'not applicable' if they felt that these aspects were not relevant to their LDI experiences.

Figure 2.10:

Satisfaction with aspects of the LDI – 2016 Lead participants (n=88)

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017

The total percentage on this figure does not add up to 100% because some of the percentages have been rounded up.



Some of the most satisfying aspects of the LDI for 2016 Lead participants were the opportunities they had to demonstrate their instructional leadership skills, the development of their instructional leadership skills, and the professional learning they received. One of the least satisfying aspects for this cohort was their frequency of contact with their mentor.

Figure 2.11 illustrates the equivalent results for 2017 Lead participants. Some of the most satisfying aspects of the LDI for 2017 Lead participants were the development of their instructional leadership skills, the professional learning they received and the LDI conferences. One of the least satisfying aspects for this participant cohort was the time they had available to work on their LDI project.

Figure 2.12 illustrates the equivalent results for 2017 HA participants. The most satisfying aspects of the LDI for 2017 HA participants was the professional support they received, followed by the development of their instructional leadership skills, and the type of contact they had with their mentor. By far the least satisfying aspects for this participant cohort was the time they had available to work on their LDI project.

Overall, some of the most satisfying aspects of the LDI for participants were the development of their instructional leadership skills and the professional learning and support they received. The high level of satisfaction regarding the development of instructional leadership skills is consistent with one of the main aims of the LDI and indicates that this aspect of the LDI has been implemented very well.

Some of the least satisfying aspects of the LDI for participants were the time that they had available to work on their LDI project and the frequency of contact with their mentor. Half of the Lead participants were dissatisfied with the frequency of contact with their mentor, compared with only 13 per cent of HA participants. As mentioned above, this indicates that the implementation of the LDI could be improved if greater contact between Lead participants and mentors can be facilitated.

Figure 2.11:

Satisfaction with aspects of the LDI – 2017 Lead participants (n=38)

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017

The total percentage on this figure does not add up to 100% because some of the percentages have been rounded up.

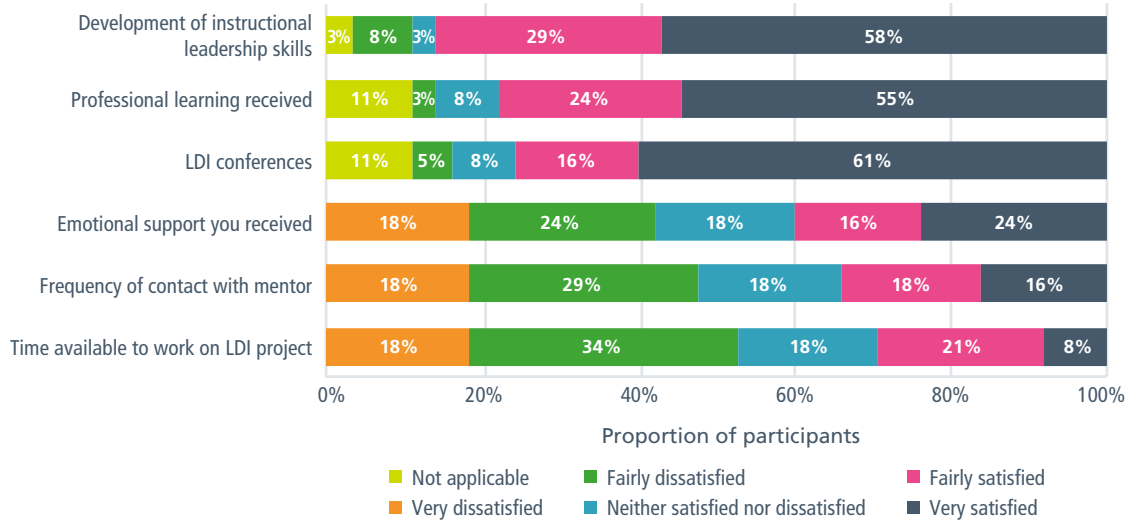
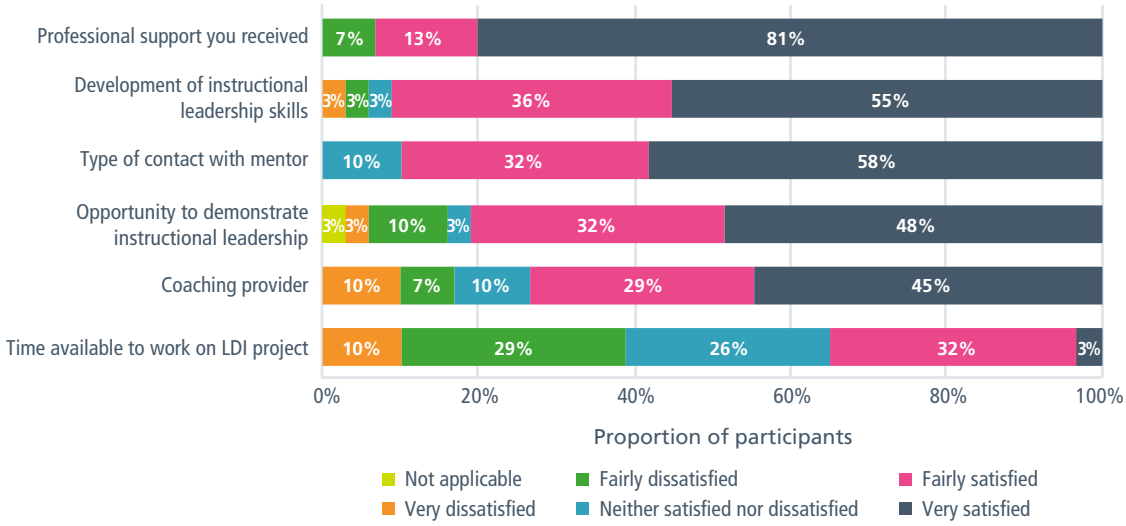


Figure 2.12:

Satisfaction with aspects of the LDI – 2017 HA participants (n=31)

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017

The total percentage on this figure does not add up to 100% because some of the percentages have been rounded up.



Mentors: Mentors also indicated how satisfied they were with various aspects of the LDI. These included:

- the frequency of contact with their participant
- their professional relationship with their participant
- the support they were able to provide
- the LDI conferences
- the development of their instructional leadership and mentoring skills.

Mentors could answer 'not applicable' if they felt that these aspects were not relevant to their LDI experiences.

Responses from mentors are summarised in Table 2.6 ('most satisfying' elements) and Table 2.7 ('least satisfying' elements).

Table 2.6:

The three 'most satisfying' aspects of the LDI

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017

2016 Lead mentors (n=32)	• the LDI conferences (8 vs; 11 fs) • the professional support they provided to their participant (7 vs; 11 fs) • the type of contact with their participant (4 vs; 15 fs).
2017 Lead (n=14)	• the development of their mentoring skills (4 vs; 8 fs) • the LDI conferences (6 vs; 4 fs) • the professional learning they received (6 vs; 4 fs).
2017 Highly Accomplished (n=14)	• the development of their mentoring skills (5 vs; 7 fs) • the professional support they provided to their participant (2 vs; 9 fs) • the LDI conferences (7 vs; 3 fs).

Note: vs = very satisfied, fs = fairly satisfied

Table 2.7:

The three 'least satisfying' aspects of the LDI

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017

2016 Lead mentors (n=32)	• the input on coaching (8 vd; 3 fd) • the frequency of contact with their participant (2 vd; 9 fd) • the development of their instructional leadership skills (5 vd; 4 fd).
2017 Lead (n=14)	• the frequency of contact with their participant (1 vd; 8 fd) • the time available to interact with their participant (2 vd; 6 fd) • the type of contact they had with their participant (1 vd; 5 fd).
2017 Highly Accomplished (n=14)	• the input on coaching (1 vd; 2 fd) • the time available to interact with their participant (1 vd; 1 was fd) • the type of contact with their participant (2 fd).

Note: vd = very dissatisfied, fd = fairly dissatisfied

Overall, some of the most satisfying aspects of the LDI for mentors were the development of their mentoring skills, the LDI conferences, and the professional support they were able to provide to their participants. The positive response to the LDI conferences suggests that these are viewed as a valuable aspect of the LDI and that they have been implemented very well. The high level of satisfaction among mentors with the development of their mentoring skills also indicates that the LDI is benefitting both participants and mentors in different, yet important ways.

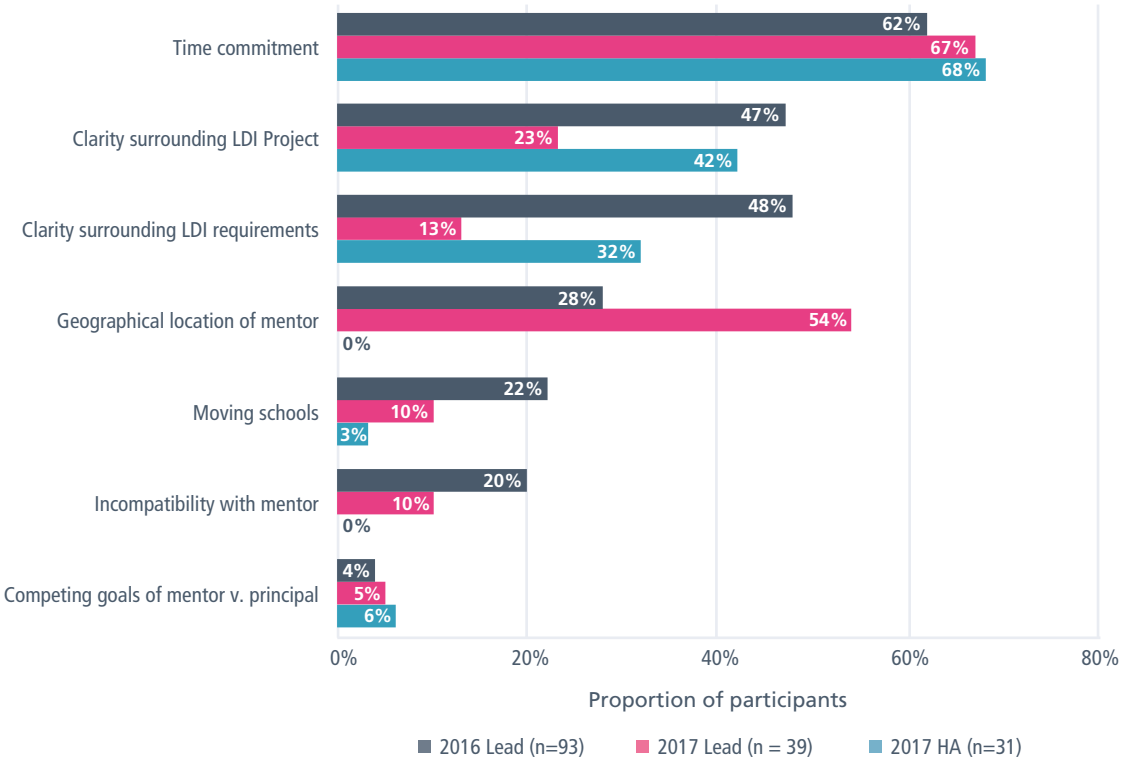
At the other end of the scale, some of the least satisfying aspects of the LDI for mentors were the frequency and type of contact with their participant, the time available to interact with their participant and the coaching input. Notably, very few HA mentors indicated that they were dissatisfied with any aspects of the LDI, which is consistent with other findings indicating that the LDI has 'really hit the mark' for the HA cohort.

Challenges

Participants: Figure 2.13 illustrates the main challenges that participants encountered during the LDI. The greatest challenge for all participants was the time commitment required to participate in the LDI. For 2016 Lead participants and 2017 HA participants, the other main challenges involved clarity surrounding the requirements of the LDI project and clarity surrounding the requirements of the LDI. For 2017 Lead participants, the geographical location of their mentor was a common challenge (54% up from 28% in 2016).

Figure 2.13:
Challenges for participants

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017



Mentors: Mentors were also asked to indicate the challenges they encountered during the LDI. The challenges faced by mentors are similar to the challenges faced by participants.

Of the 37 2016 Lead mentors who responded to this survey question:

- 19 found the time commitment challenging
- 18 found the clarity surrounding the requirements of the LDI project challenging
- 17 found the clarity surrounding the requirements of the LDI itself challenging
- 16 found the geographical location of their participant challenging.

Of the 14 2017 Lead mentors who responded to this survey question:

- nine found the geographical location of their participant challenging
- six found the time commitment challenging.

Of the 14 HA mentors who responded to this survey question:

- six found the time commitment challenging
- five found the clarity surrounding the requirements of the LDI project challenging.

These findings suggest that the implementation of the LDI could be improved by providing greater clarity about the requirements of the LDI project and the LDI overall.

2.4.8 Exiting the LDI early

Table 2.8 illustrates the number of participants and mentors who have withdrawn from the LDI as of November 2017.[9]

Withdrawals from the 2017 cohorts are current at November 2017 and therefore may be an underestimate. However it is worth noting that the number of withdrawn Lead participants has reduced substantially from 2016 (32) to 2017 (3). This could reflect improvements in the application and selection processes, as well as the experience of the LDI itself.

Table 2.8:

Withdrawn participants and mentors

Source: LDI Program Administrators, Leadership and High Performance

	Withdrawn Participants		Withdrawn Mentors	
	Lead	HA	Lead	HA
2016	32	N/A*	5	N/A*
2017	3	2	2	2**

*N/A = no Highly Accomplished cohort in 2016
**These two mentors had to withdraw when their participants withdrew

Of the 249 survey respondents, 18 participants and one mentor indicated that they had withdrawn from the LDI. Due to the low number of withdrawn mentors who responded to the survey, only data from withdrawn participants will be presented here.

Of the 18 participants who withdrew and responded to the survey, 17 were 2016 Lead participants and one was a 2017 Highly Accomplished participant.

Reasons for exiting early

Withdrawn participants were asked why they had exited the LDI (they could select more than one option). A variety of reasons were provided including:

- "I was promoted to another position" (six of 18 withdrawn participants)
- "lack of time to commit to the LDI" (five of 18)
- "I moved to another school" (four of 18).

Two respondents also indicated that they were no longer in teaching positions; this made it difficult to display the Lead standards.

Clarity of roles

Withdrawn participants indicated how clear their understanding was of their own role and their mentor's role.

Of the 18 withdrawn participants who responded to the survey:

- 14 were 'very clear' or 'fairly clear' about their own role; four were 'fairly unclear' about it
- 10 were 'very clear' or 'fairly clear' about their mentor's role; eight were 'very unclear' or 'fairly unclear' about it.

The low number of withdrawals makes it difficult to meaningfully compare this group with the ongoing participant group. However, the proportions are broadly similar.

In terms of challenges faced by withdrawn participants, their main challenges were:

- the time commitment required to participate (eight of 18 withdrawn participants)
- the geographical location of their mentor (applicable to Lead participants only; eight of 17 withdrawn participants)
- clarity surrounding the requirements of the LDI (six withdrawn participants).

These challenges are similar to those faced by participants who did not withdraw from the LDI.

9 Note that the timing of the survey (August 2017) differs to the timing of the administrative data presented in Table 2.8 (November 2017).

2.4.9 Aspects that are working well and those that can be improved

Interviews

Participants: During interviews, participants indicated that the following aspects of the LDI are working well:

- Having discussions at the conferences with a network of colleagues (four of the eight participants interviewed).

  "The opportunity to get together at the conferences. And just to touch base with the organisers and other participants, and have those professional discussions. Sharing ideas. I have found that part probably the most valuable at the moment." - 2017 HA participant

- Having financial support (four of the eight participants interviewed).

  "The financial support to actually be relieved … some of my financial support has been to be relieved from class to be able to do observations or to attend something. That's what's worked well, I think, financial support." - 2017 HA participant

Participants also indicated that the following aspects of the LDI could be improved:

- More milestones and greater accountability (three of the eight participants interviewed).

  "The only thing would be just a little bit more clarification, you know, setting us milestones, if you know what I mean. Like – we've started it, we've had these conferences, but little friendly reminders or milestones…. I know everyone's projects will be different but just setting us little milestones, to keep us on track." - 2017 HA participant

- Greater support for those in rural or remote areas (three of the eight participants interviewed).

  "…we don't have casuals out here. So I'm in regional New South Wales and there's no chance of getting a casual. The funding is fabulous because it pays for the casual whenever we find one … the problem is finding them in the first place." - 2017 HA participant

Mentors: During interviews, mentors indicated that the following aspects of the LDI are working well:

- Developing a greater understanding of the process surrounding higher accreditation (four of the eight mentors interviewed).

  "It enhanced and deepened my knowledge of the requirements of a person going for accreditation at lead level and highly accomplished." - 2016 Lead Mentor

- Developing their coaching and mentoring skills (three of the eight mentors interviewed).

  "Personally what else I got out of it were some skills in coaching. I hadn't done any coaching courses as such before, so that was really good to get a little bit of training in that at the initial conference." - 2016 Lead Mentor

Mentors also called out reminders and accountability as an aspect of the LDI that could be improved (five of the eight mentors interviewed):

"There was no real accountability practices put into place. So it just felt like everyone had money thrown at them, but there were no expectations around how they spent it, the milestones that they needed to achieve, the contact that they needed to have with their mentors or each other." - 2016 Lead Mentor

Directors: During interviews, Directors varied in the extent to which they were aware of the LDI. One Director indicated that an aspect of the LDI that was working well involved the development of collaborative leadership skills. This Director said:

"[The] project is authentic, [the participant] understands, [the participant has] done a lot of research and I think it's making a big difference . . . in leadership and how [the participant is] contributing to the leadership in that school, and [the participant's] teaching and learning." - Director

Directors also indicated two aspects of the LDI for attention:

- Greater support for those in rural or remote areas. One Director said:

  "A lot of it is in Sydney... we've got to get it to some local or non-metropolitan venues… Time and distance and opportunity, I suppose, are the problems across the State." - Director

- More focus on classroom level changes. One Director said:

> *"People have been taken out of their schools to have wonderful conversations with other leaders, but I'm not sure that's making a difference at the classroom level where it needs to. There seems to be a lot of going to activities and doing events. I'd like to see the focus being bringing work, or doing work or having those conversations at a classroom level, and maybe sharing them electronically rather than necessarily gathering people up … I've noticed a lot of absences in my schools." - Director*

Thus, participants, mentors, and Directors indicated that many aspects of the LDI are working well such as the conferences, financial support, and development of leadership and mentoring skills. However, both participants and mentors mentioned that they would like a clear structure and milestones that they can work towards. It is worth noting that participants and mentors were encouraged to set their own milestones, and half a day at one of the LDI conferences was devoted to this. Further, Lead participants were working on an aspect of their school plan which would have had its own milestones and timeline. It may be helpful to clarify that milestones are specific to each individual and, as such, will not be prescribed by the program administrators.

Participants and Directors also wanted greater equity for rural and remote areas. Although participants and mentors from remote areas were offered additional reimbursement for their travel expenses, they were still faced with other challenges such as finding a casual to relieve them.

2.5 Key findings – outcome evaluation

2.5.1 Summary of outcome evaluation findings

Overall, there is evidence to suggest that the Leadership Development Initiative is enhancing the instructional leadership knowledge and capabilities of both participants and mentors. Capabilities that were enhanced for participants included their self-reflection about their leadership practices, and their ability to develop the instructional leadership capacity of others. Capabilities that were enhanced for mentors were their ability to help others gain higher accreditation and their ability to coach or mentor others.

Both participants and mentors said that the LDI Conferences had been very beneficial and that they had developed new skills from their involvement in the LDI such as communication skills and their understanding of evidence requirements for higher accreditation. Mentors exhibited a variety of different mentoring styles and participants who found their mentor very helpful, tended to view them as an expert leader, supporter or critical friend.

Participants and mentors indicated that the LDI had improved their use and understanding of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*. This view was supported by principals at schools where staff had been involved in the LDI. These principals noted that the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* were used more widely throughout their schools.

Finally, although the majority of participants intend to apply for leadership roles in the future, a significant proportion of 2016 Lead participants have not yet decided or are unlikely to submit their application for higher accreditation. Future research will help inform whether this occurs for all cohorts and whether additional support might be beneficial.

In summary, the outcome evaluation is consistent with the findings of the process evaluation which indicates that the program is having the greatest positive impact on Highly Accomplished participants. Among other things, this is likely to reflect the close proximity between Highly Accomplished participants and mentors. Additionally, the 2017 Lead cohort appear to be benefitting more from the LDI than the 2016 Lead cohort, which suggests improvements in the program over time.

2.5.2 Perceived benefits of the LDI

Participants

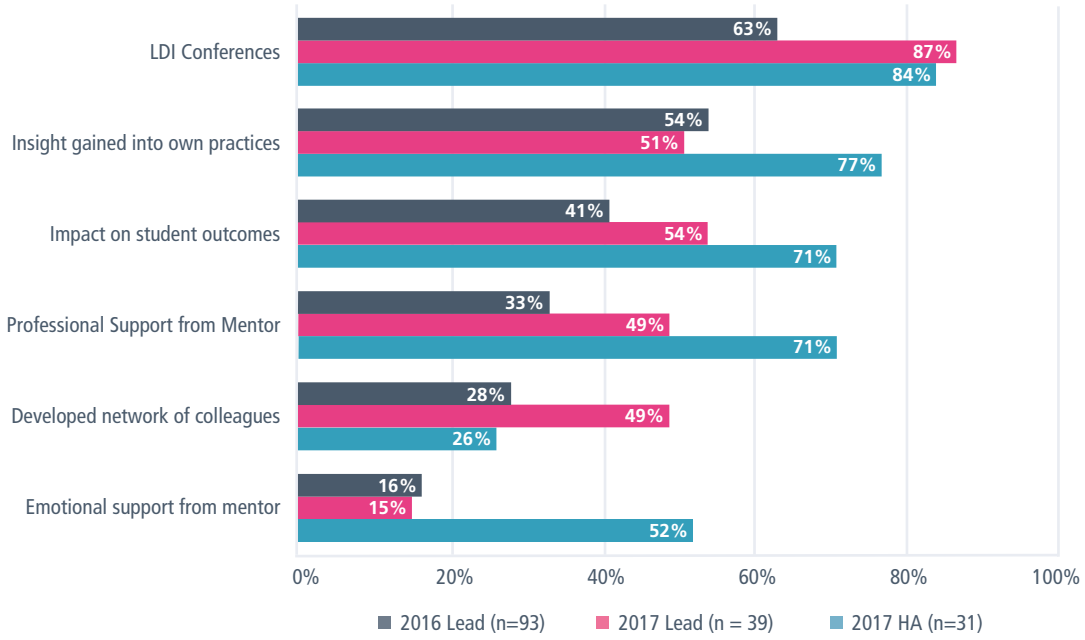
Survey respondents were asked to indicate which aspects of the LDI were beneficial for them (multiple responses could be selected). The main benefits selected by participants are illustrated in Figure 2.14.[10] Benefits were similar across all cohorts and included the LDI Conferences, insights participants gained into their practices and the impact that participants were able to have on student outcomes.

10 For a full list of benefits, see Appendix B.

Figure 2.14:

Perceived benefits according to participants

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017



In several instances, the benefits reported by HA participants outstripped those for Lead participants. Three times as many HA participants (52%) benefitted from the emotional support provided by their mentor, compared with Lead participants in 2017 (15%) and 2016 (16%). For HA participants, three in four (77%) benefited from the insight they gained into their own practices, compared to half of the Lead participants in 2017 (51%) and 2016 (54%).

During interviews, all eight participants indicated that many aspects of the professional learning they received at the LDI conferences had been valuable. For example, one 2017 HA participant said:

> *"There were the hot table topics with guest speakers who had been through the process, and I found that really, really valuable. However … that was pushed through in an hour and a half, where I would have been quite happy to see that all day long." - 2017 HA participant*

Six interviewees also indicated that they had developed new skills as a result of the LDI. These included:

- communication skills
- familiarity with the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*
- understanding the annotation of evidence
- leadership skills
- evaluative thinking
- time management.

Mentors

Mentors were also asked to indicate which aspects of the LDI were beneficial for them (multiple responses could be selected). The main benefits selected varied across cohorts.[11]

Of the 37 2016 Lead mentors who responded to this survey question, benefits included:

- the LDI Conferences (24 mentors)
- the professional relationship I had with my participant (19 mentors)
- the ability to inspire colleagues (15 mentors).

Of the 14 2017 Lead mentors who responded to this survey question, benefits included:

- the LDI Conferences (12 mentors)
- seeing my participant develop their instructional leadership skills (10 mentors)
- the professional learning I received (nine mentors).

11 For a full list of benefits, see Appendix B

Of the 14 2017 HA mentors who responded to this survey question, benefits included:

- seeing my participant develop their instructional leadership skills (11 mentors)
- the professional relationship I had with my participant (11 mentors)
- the LDI conferences (10 mentors).

Again, there are a number of differences between cohorts regarding the main benefits they feel they received from the LDI. For example:

- Fewer 2016 Lead mentors thought that seeing their participants develop instructional leadership skills was beneficial (nine of 37), compared to 10 of the 14 2017 Lead mentors and 11 of the 14 2017 HA mentors.
- Nine of the 14 2017 Lead mentors benefitted from the professional learning they received, compared with nine of the 37 2016 Lead mentors and five of the 14 2017 HA mentors.

During interviews, six of the eight mentors interviewed indicated that many aspects of the professional learning they received at the LDI conferences had been valuable. For example, one 2016 Lead mentor said:

> *"I went to the initial two-day conference, and that was fantastic. I got a lot from that in regards to indicators at Lead level, as opposed to Highly Accomplished level, and how to ensure that what you're doing is going to meet the standards of Lead. So there was a lot of work about what does Lead look like and I found that really, really valuable." - 2016 Lead Mentor*

Four interviewees also indicated that they had developed new skills as a result of the LDI. These included:

- understanding the annotation of evidence
- aligning evidence to the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*
- leadership skills
- coaching and mentoring skills.

2.5.3 Number of teachers working towards higher accreditation

Table 2.9 shows the number of individuals who have started a submission for Lead or Highly Accomplished accreditation with and without the LDI. As this table indicates, the majority of individuals who have started their submissions for higher accreditation are also LDI participants.

Table 2.9:

Individuals working towards higher accreditation

Source: LDI Program Administrators and National Education Standards Authority (NESA) as at November 2017

	Commenced accreditation submission with the LDI		Commenced accreditation submission without the LDI	
	Lead	HA	Lead	HA
2011-2015	N/A	N/A	225	257
2016	147	N/A	13	49
2017	48	45	11	41

2.5.4 Completion and success rates

Table 2.10 shows the number of individuals who have completed a submission for Lead or Highly Accomplished accreditation with and without the LDI. Table 2.10 also shows the number of individuals who have successfully gained accreditation with and without the LDI. Since individuals have a three-year timeframe in which to complete their accreditation submission, this data does not yet give a clear indication of how the LDI has influenced completion and success rates.

Table 2.10:

Accreditation completion and success rates with and without the LDI

Source: LDI Program Administrators and National Education Standards Authority (NESA)

	Completed submission with the LDI		Completed submission without the LDI		Gained accreditation with the LDI		Gained accreditation without the LDI	
	Lead	HA	Lead	HA	Lead	HA	Lead	HA
2016-2017	4	N/A	0	3	2	N/A	0	2

Four individuals who have completed submissions at Lead level and the two who have successfully gained accreditation at Lead level have been participants in the LDI. The program administrators see this as a good success rate given the total number of teachers who are accredited in NSW at Lead and Highly Accomplished (Table 2.11).

Table 2.11:

Total number of teachers in NSW accredited at Lead and HA

Lead	Highly Accomplished
56	48

2.5.5 Impact on instructional leadership

To index instructional leadership knowledge and capabilities, survey and interview questions focused on whether participants felt they were able to influence the practices of others, their ability to coach/mentor others, and whether they had changed the way they reflect on their own leadership practices. For example, survey respondents were asked to what extent the LDI had improved their ability to:

- model their practices for others
- influence the practices of others
- self-reflect on their teaching practices
- improve student outcomes
- lead colleagues
- coach/mentor others
- gain Lead/Highly Accomplished accreditation.

Across all of these areas, at least 88 per cent of respondents indicated that their abilities had slightly, moderately or substantially improved. For both Lead and HA participants, the top areas where there was moderate or substantial improvement were in their ability to gain higher accreditation (74% of Lead participants, 93% of HA participants) and their ability to self-reflect on their practices (77% of Lead participants, 88% of HA participants).

Instructional leadership capabilities without the LDI

Those who applied for higher accreditation without the LDI were also asked to what extent the accreditation process had improved their abilities in these areas. Across all of these areas, at least three in four of the respondents indicated that their abilities had slightly, moderately or substantially improved.

Of the eight Lead applicants who responded to the survey, the top area where there was moderate or substantial improvement was their ability to self-reflect on their practices (five respondents).

Of the 11 HA applicants who responded to the survey, the top areas where there was moderate or substantial improvement were:

- ability to model practices for others (nine respondents)
- ability to influence the practices of others (nine respondents)
- ability to self-reflect on their teaching practices (nine respondents)
- ability to lead colleagues (nine respondents)
- ability to coach/mentor others (nine respondents).

Interview comments about impact on participants' instructional leadership

During interviews, five participants indicated that the LDI had helped them develop the instructional leadership capacity of others. For example, one 2017 Lead participant said:

> *"The reason it has is because I think right now I have a better understanding of the Standards. Having that in mind in my practice day to day has definitely made me be more mindful of those people that I'm leading in my current position and passing that on to them." - 2017 Lead Participant*

During interviews, seven participants indicated that the LDI had changed the way they reflected on their own leadership practices. For example, one 2016 Lead participant said:

> *"There were reflective exercises that we participated in … that came about through the conference. They were reflective tools - the whole thing is reflective in terms of accreditation because you're judging yourself based on evidence that you can demonstrate the skills and attributes in the professional standards for teachers at lead level. So, it's very much a reflective process." - 2016 Lead Participant*

Four of the principals who were interviewed had staff at their school who had been participants in the LDI. These principals indicated that the LDI had a positive impact on the instructional leadership skills of participants. Specifically, the LDI influenced the instructional leadership skills of participants in the following ways:

- increased use of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*
- improved teaching and learning
- improved ability to collect evidence of impact
- increased involvement in leadership roles.

One principal of a 2016 Lead participant said:

> *"Since then I've included him in another leadership team where we're working across three networks … He's always had the skills, however the LDI gave him an opportunity to put his hand up and say, I want this, I want to do this, I see value in it, I see value in aspiring to the higher levels of Lead." - Principal of 2016 Lead Participant*

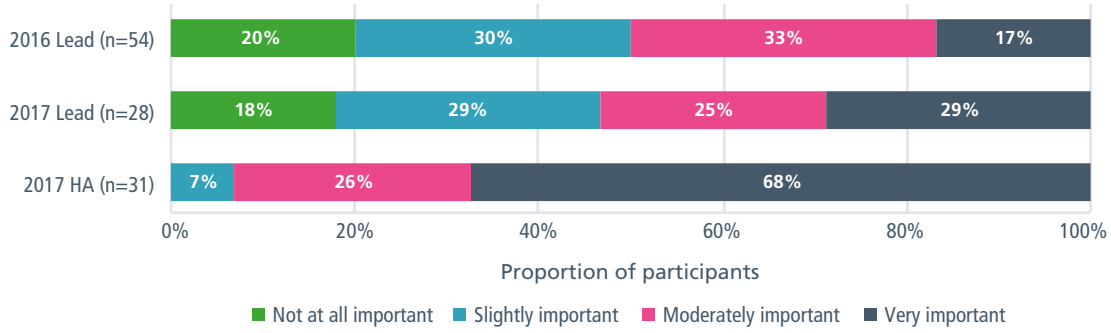
Mentors' role in developing instructional leadership skills

Respondents also indicated how important their mentor's support was in developing their instructional leadership skills. As shown in Figure 2.15, 52 per cent of Lead participants found the support from their mentor moderately or very important for developing their instructional leadership skills. However, over 90 per cent of HA participants found the support from their mentor moderately or very important in developing their instructional leadership skills.

Figure 2.15:

Importance of support from mentor in developing instructional leadership skills

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017



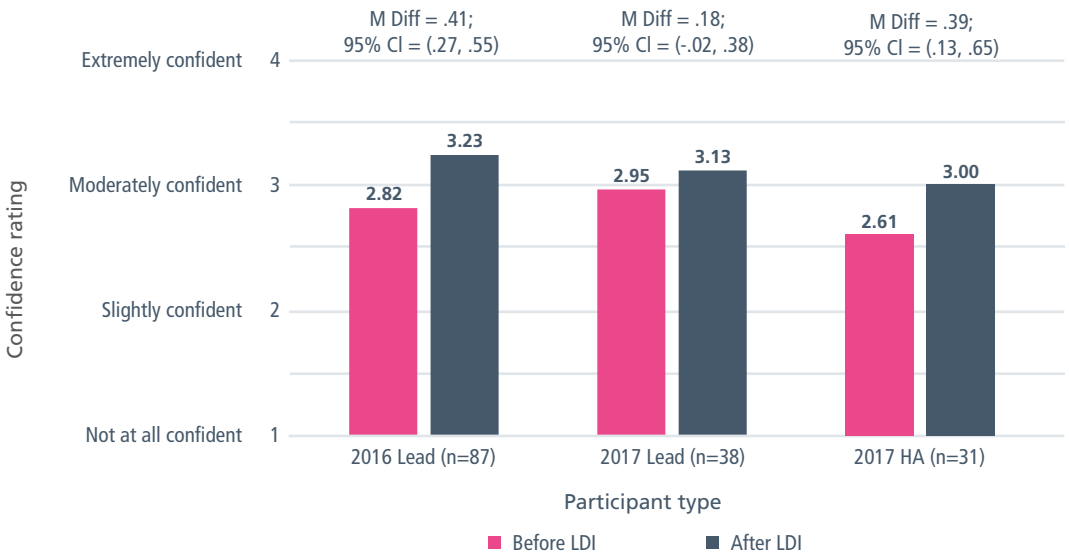
Participant confidence about instructional leadership skills

Participants were asked to rate how confident they felt about their instructional leadership skills *before* their acceptance into the LDI and *at the time of the feedback survey.* As illustrated in Figure 2.16, all respondents reported an increase in confidence during the LDI. This increase was statistically significant for 2016 Lead participants ($p < .01$) and 2017 Highly Accomplished participants ($p < .01$).The increase for 2017 Lead participants was smaller, and also came off a higher base. As a consequence, the significance testing ($p=.07$) falls just outside the threshold of $p=.05$.

Figure 2.16:

Mean confidence rating of instructional leadership

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017



2.5.6 Impact on mentor instructional leadership knowledge and capabilities

To index instructional leadership knowledge and capabilities among mentors, survey and interview questions focused on whether they felt they were able to influence the practices of others, their ability to coach/mentor others and whether they had changed the way they reflect on their own leadership practices. For example, survey respondents were asked to what extent the LDI had improved their ability to:

- model their practices for others
- influence the practices of others
- self-reflect on their teaching practices
- improve student outcomes
- lead colleagues
- coach/mentor others
- help others gain Lead/Highly Accomplished accreditation.

Across all of these areas, over 62 per cent of respondents indicated that their abilities had slightly, moderately or substantially improved. For both Lead and HA mentors, the top areas where there was moderate or substantial improvement were in their:

- ability to help others gain higher accreditation (62% of Lead mentors; 71% of HA mentors)
- ability to coach/mentor others (55% of Lead mentors; 50% of HA mentors).

Interview comments about impact on mentors' instructional leadership

During interviews, six mentors indicated that the LDI had helped them develop the instructional leadership capacity of others. For example, one 2016 and 2017 Lead mentor said:

> *"I started to challenge one … around his instructional leadership. I basically kept asking him the question: 'So what do you want kids to be doing, what do you want teachers to be doing? How is that going to change and what is it that you're focusing on?' He misunderstood what leading learning was about. It was an interesting conversation that I kept having with him." - 2016 and 2017 Lead Mentor*

During interviews, six mentors indicated that the LDI had helped them change the way they reflect on their leadership practices. For example, one 2017 HA mentor said:

> *"I guess I'm more self-reflective in how I communicate. But also, asking and seeking feedback from the mentees as well as other staff in regards to my leadership practices and how I can support people in the way that they need." - 2017 HA Mentor*

Four principals were interviewed who had staff at their school who had been mentors in the LDI. Three of these principals indicated that the LDI had a positive impact on the instructional leadership skills of mentors. Specifically, the LDI influenced the instructional leadership skills of participants in the following ways:

- increased use of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*
- generated interest in leadership and accreditation amongst other staff
- increased collegial support and discussion in the school

One principal of a 2017 HA mentor (and HA participant) said:

> *"I think at the moment they're using evidence to improve teaching and learning, so that's having a spinoff because what they're doing is sharing that knowledge as well. So it has a direct benefit to the school in terms of what we're getting from them as well." - Principal of 2017 HA Mentor*

Mentor confidence about instructional leadership skills

Mentors were asked to rate how confident they felt about their instructional leadership skills before their acceptance into the LDI and currently.

Findings indicated that the confidence of respondents did not significantly change (all $Fs < 1.01$, all p-values $> .05$). However, this may be due to a ceiling effect, where mentors were already very confident about their instructional leadership skills prior to participating in the LDI. This is supported by the finding that mentors' ratings of confidence before the LDI are greater than participants' ratings of confidence before the LDI.

2.5.7 Impact on value and use of *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*

Participants

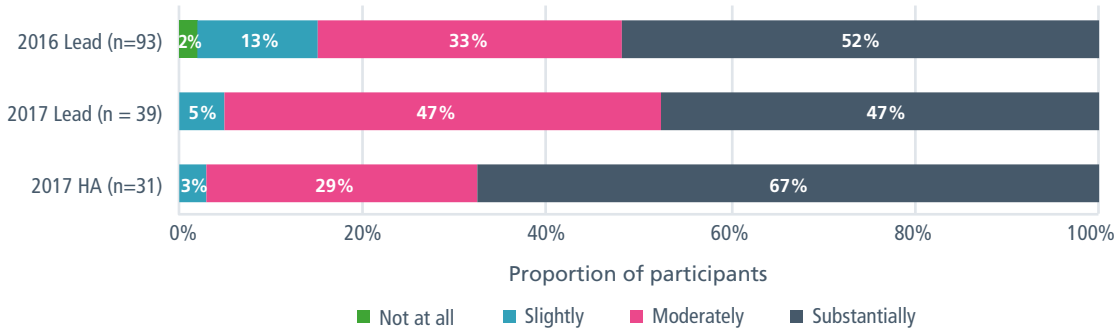
The LDI has a strong focus on the understanding and use of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*. Both participants and mentors were encouraged to use these Standards throughout the LDI.

As shown in Figure 2.17, over 80 per cent of participants indicated that the LDI had moderately or substantially improved their understanding of the Standards. This was especially the case for Highly Accomplished participants, where two thirds (67%) indicated a substantial improvement in their understanding.

Figure 2.17:

Extent to which the LDI improved understanding of *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017



Participants were asked how the LDI influenced their use of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* in their Performance and Development Plan.

Of the 87 2016 Lead participants who responded to this survey question:

- 50 participants (57%) use the Standards much more often
- 18 participants (21%) use the Standards slightly more often.

Of the 38 2017 Lead participants who responded to this survey question:

- 21 participants (55%) use the Standards much more often
- eight participants (21%) use the Standards slightly more often.

Of the 31 2017 HA participants who responded to this question:

- 20 participants (65%) use the Standards much more often
- seven (23%) use the Standards slightly more often.

No participants said that they did not use the Standards in their Performance and Development Plans and no participants reported using the Standards less often as a consequence of the LDI.

Principals at schools where staff had been involved in the LDI were also asked whether there had been a change in the way the Standards were used within the school. Three principals indicated that there was more widespread use of the Standards throughout the school. One principal of both a participant and mentor in 2017 said:

> *"I do think that we are opening them more regularly. Every professional learning now – we put up the standards that we're addressing. And everyone does that. That's a matter of practice. We have someone that actually helps keep a diary of all the professional learning we're running and linking it to standards as well." - Principal of 2017 participant and mentor*

Similarly, two principals indicated that the Standards were valued more amongst staff in their schools. For example, one principal of both participants and mentors in 2017 said:

> *"I think everyone's become acutely aware that we need to be really, really looking at the standards when we do anything…They realise that if they're going to achieve highly accomplished or lead – that they need to be addressing the standards. I'd say we are always opening them now … we're very conscious of them." - Principal of 2017 participant and mentor*

Of those who applied for higher accreditation without the LDI, all eight Lead respondents and nine of the 11 HA respondents indicated that the accreditation process had moderately or substantially improved their understanding of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*. Additionally, seven of eight Lead respondents and seven of 11 HA respondents reported using the Standards either slightly more or much more often. None of these respondents said that they did not use the Standards in their Performance and Development Plans and none said that they now used the Standards less often.

Mentors

Mentors also indicated the extent to which the LDI had improved their understanding of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*.

Improvements (moderate or substantial) were reported by over half of the Leader mentors in 2016 (17 of 30), and more than two-thirds in 2017 (eight of 11 2017 Lead mentors, 11 of 14 2017 Highly Accomplished mentors).

Mentors were also asked to what extent they encourage others to use the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* in their Performance and Development plans.

In 2016, half of the mentors reported encouraging their participants to use the Standards more often (12 'much more', three 'slightly more', out of 30 responses)

In 2017, this lifted to more than two thirds:

- seven for 2017 Lead mentors
- three for 2017 Highly Accomplished mentors.

2.5.8 Are some types of mentoring more effective than others?

The CESE LDI Survey indexed different types of mentoring by asking participants to what extent they viewed their mentor as a:

- trouble shooter
- counsellor
- supporter
- instructional model
- coach
- guide
- critical friend
- expert leader.

An indicator of mentoring effectiveness is how helpful participants found the support from their mentors. Participants were asked whether they had received support from their mentor in 12 different areas including:

1. Providing feedback on your practices
2. How to deliver feedback to others
3. How to share practices with others
4. How to model practices for others
5. Opportunities to observe others' lessons
6. Access to teaching resources
7. Networking opportunities
8. How to effectively lead colleagues
9. Professional support
10. Emotional support
11. Ideas for professional development
12. Boost in self-confidence.

Those who had received support from their mentor were subsequently asked how helpful that support had been (scored on a scale of 0 to 3). CESE summed these scores across all of the areas where participants had received support. The maximum possible score varied for each participant, depending on how many areas they had received support in. Therefore, the score was converted to a proportion of each participant's maximum possible score.

Figure 2.18 illustrates participants who rated their mentors in the top third for overall helpfulness (i.e., they found their mentors 'very helpful') according to how they viewed their mentor. As illustrated, those who found their mentor 'very helpful', tended to view them as being a great deal like an expert leader (87%), supporter (87%) or critical friend (74%).

Figure 2.18:
Participants who thought their mentor was very helpful

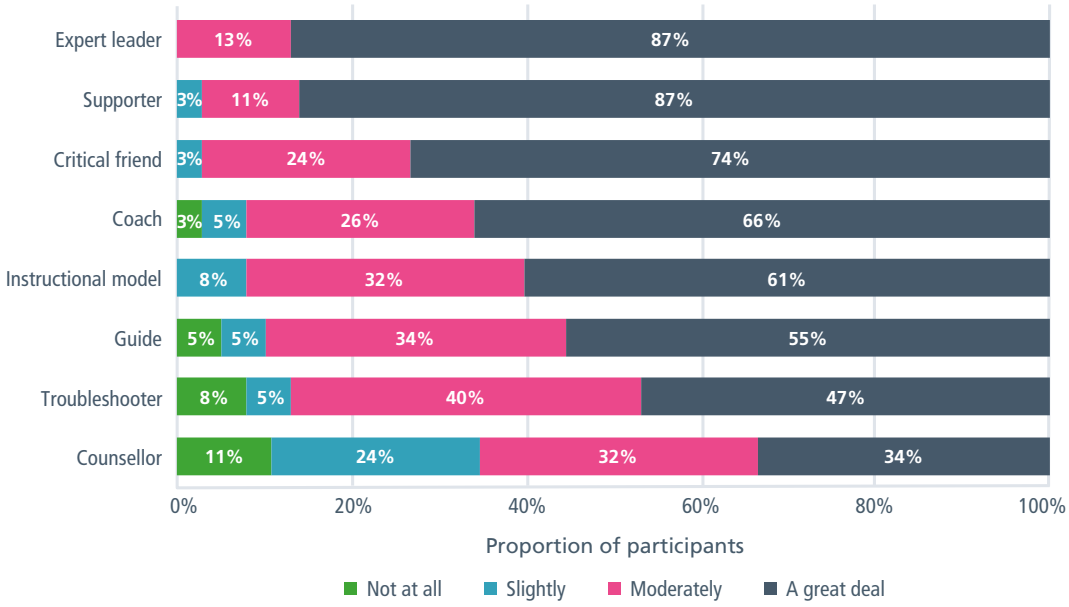
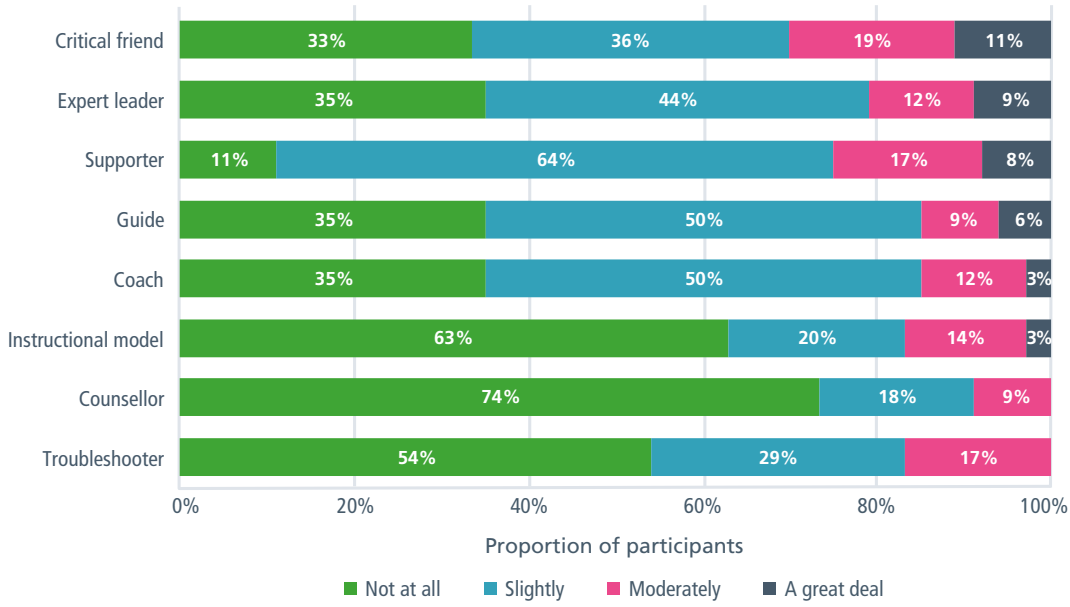


Figure 2.19 illustrates participants who rated their mentors in the lower third for overall helpfulness (i.e. they found their mentors not very helpful). As illustrated, these participants did not tend to view their mentor as being a critical friend (11%), expert leader (9%) or supporter (8%). The participants who thought their mentor was 'not very helpful' did not cite a common mentoring style (Figure 2.19).

Figure 2.19:
Participants who thought their mentor was not very helpful



These findings suggest that mentors who are expert leaders, supporters, and critical friends may be perceived as more helpful and effective in their mentoring role than other types of mentors.

2.5.9 Future intentions

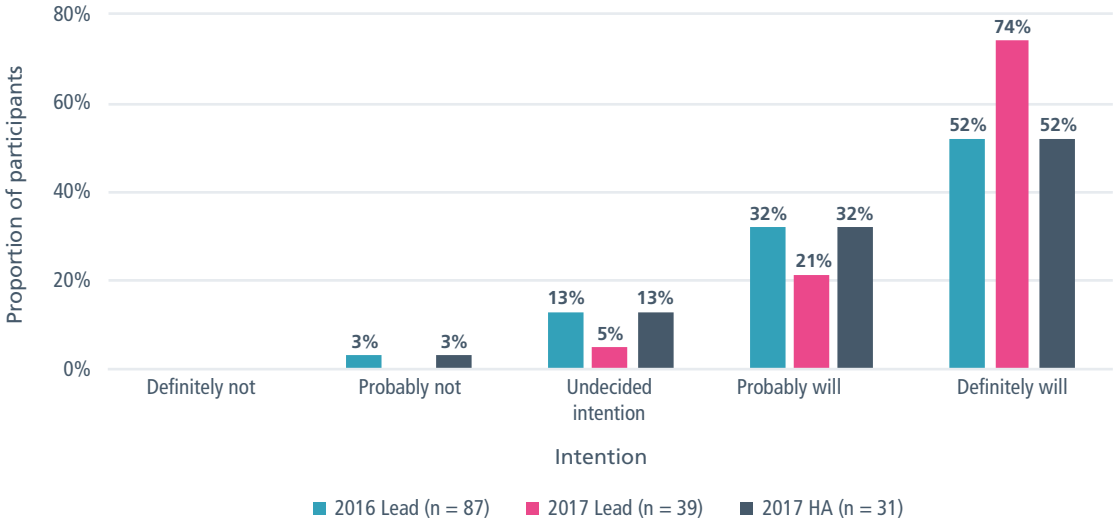
Participants

Participants were asked if they intended to apply for leadership roles in the future. As shown in Figure 2.20, the majority of participants said they 'probably will' or 'definitely will' apply for leadership roles in the future. Notably, 74 per cent of 2017 Lead participants said they 'definitely will' apply for leadership roles in the future.

Figure 2.20:

Participant intention to apply for future leadership roles

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017



Participants were also asked if they intended to apply to the LDI as a mentor in the future. Among Lead participants, one in three said they intended to do this in 2016 (10 'definitely' and 23 'probably', out of 88 responses). This lifted to over half in 2017 (nine 'definitely' and 12 'probably', out of 38 responses). HA participants were even more enthusiastic to return as mentors (71%): eight 'definitely' and 14 'probably', out of 31 responses.

Mentors

Mentors were asked if they intended to apply for leadership roles in the future.

Two in three Lead mentors in 2016 said they intended to do this (13 'definitely' and six 'probably', out of 30 responses). This lifted to almost three in four in 2017 (five 'definitely' and three 'probably', out of 11 responses).

Over three quarters of 2017 HA mentors said they intended to apply for leadership roles in the future (three 'definitely' and seven 'probably', out of 13 responses).

Mentors were also asked if they intended to apply to the LDI as a mentor in the future.

Over a third of the Lead mentors in 2016 said they intended to reapply as an LDI mentor (four 'definitely' and seven 'probably, out of 30 responses). This increased to almost all Lead mentors in 2017 reporting they would (four 'definitely' and six 'probably', out of 11 responses).

Two in three HA mentors said they intended to reapply as an LDI mentor (three 'definitely' and five 'probably', out of 13 responses).

2.5.10 Unexpected outcomes

One unexpected outcome for participants involves the level of clarity surrounding the requirements of the LDI project and of the LDI itself. Surprisingly, Highly Accomplished participants rated these as more challenging than Lead participants (see Figure 2.13). This is inconsistent with the general pattern of results which suggest that the LDI is more successful for Highly Accomplished participants. A possible explanation for this is that 2017 was the first year where the LDI included HA participants and mentors. Documentation and explanations around the LDI requirements for HA participants have not had the chance to be refined in the way they have for Lead participants. Indeed, 2017 Lead participants found the level of clarity surrounding the LDI project and the LDI itself less challenging than their 2016 counterparts. Based on this, it is expected that clarity for HA participants will lift in 2018 and beyond.

Another unexpected outcome surrounds the intention of LDI participants to submit their applications for Highly Accomplished or Lead accreditation within the required three year timeframe. Participants were asked whether they had already submitted their application for Lead or Highly Accomplished accreditation. Several had already submitted their applications:

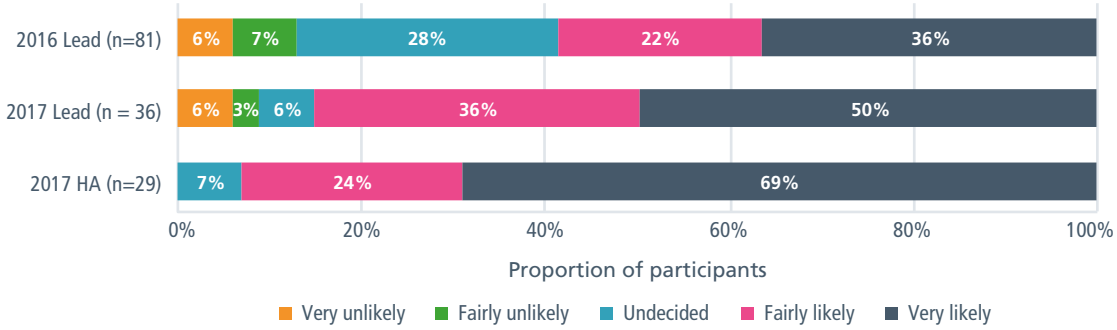
- 2016 Lead participants – seven respondents (8%) had submitted
- 2017 Lead participants – three respondents (8%) had submitted
- 2017 HA participants – two respondents (7%) had submitted.

Those who had not yet submitted were asked how likely they were to submit within the three-year timeframe. These findings are illustrated in Figure 2.21.

Figure 2.21:

Likelihood of participants submitting their accreditation applications

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017



As shown in Figure 2.21, only 58 per cent of 2016 Lead participants said they are 'fairly likely' or' very likely' to submit their applications for Lead accreditation. This is quite different to 2017 Lead participants where 86 per cent of respondents are 'fairly likely' or 'very likely' to submit their application. These findings may indicate that over time, or once the LDI program support has finished, Lead participants become less likely to submit their applications. Future research may find it useful to examine whether this decline is a trend that occurs over time for all cohorts, and the factors that are contributing to this.

2.6 Concluding comments

The evidence presented in this report indicates that the LDI has made a valuable contribution to the instructional leadership capabilities of both participants and mentors and has increased their understanding and use of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers*. The initiative appears to be especially successful for the 2017 Highly Accomplished cohort. This may in part be due to the close proximity of HA participants and mentors, which is likely to have facilitated easier and more frequent contact.

Both participants and mentors would have found it useful if milestones were set at various intervals throughout the year. This would help them ensure that they are making suitable progress towards their LDI goals. Participants and mentors would also benefit from greater clarity surrounding the LDI project and the requirements of the LDI itself.

There is also evidence to suggest that the LDI has improved from 2016 to 2017. A number of changes to the initiative were instigated in 2017, including a selection panel for all expressions of interest, an additional LDI conference, and more focused criteria surrounding the LDI project. Thus, in 2017 the most suitable applicants were involved in the LDI and there was an increase in professional learning as well as greater project clarification. However, given that the LDI is still within its first two years (and the HA cohort is within its first year), it would be worthwhile re-visiting these evaluation questions in the future when the initiative has been in place for longer period of time.

3. The Principal, School Leadership initiative

3.1 Background

The Principal, School Leadership initiative (PSL) is a key component of the Department's *School Leadership Strategy* and operationalises action 15.2 of Great Teaching, Inspired Learning (GTIL). The objective of action 15.2 is to better support school leaders so they can drive great teaching in their schools.

PSLs are experienced principals with extensive skills and knowledge who support new, established, and aspiring principals in their professional development, wellbeing, and ongoing capabilities. PSLs use a variety of coaching, mentoring, and professional development techniques to build leadership capacity and help leaders develop healthy, sustainable leadership practices. PSLs also lead the External Validation of school self-assessment against the School Excellence Framework. The support provided by PSLs can be targeted towards the individual needs of school leaders if required.

PSLs have three strategic directions which underpin their work:

- *Systems leadership* – building communities of practice across schools with a focus on developing leaders who are enabling and strategic in their support of staff and community
- *Building leadership capacity* – building the capacity of individual school leaders to improve student outcomes within a performance and development culture
- *Sustainable leadership* – promoting sustainable leadership practices which include promoting healthy work-life balance and effective practices to support wellbeing.

In addition to supporting new and existing principals, PSLs can support relieving/acting principals, middle executive, and aspiring leaders. PSLs are not responsible for principal supervision, performance management, or principal accountability.

Over 2014-2016, funding was committed for 50 PSL roles. Subsequent rounds of recruitment have been conducted in 2016 and 2017 and the PSL function is continuing into 2018.

3.2 Evaluation aims

This is a narrow evaluation of the PSL Initiative, limited to key survey questions from the 2016 and 2017 principal surveys about support provided to principals by PSLs. The specific aims of the analysis were to examine:

1. Principals' understanding of the PSL initiative
2. The nature of support provided by PSLs
3. The extent to which principals across NSW have accessed PSL support
4. Whether principals were satisfied with the support they received from PSLs.

3.3 Approach

The CESE Principal Survey

The CESE Principal Survey was developed to assist with the evaluation of a number of major education reforms, including the Great Teaching, Inspired Learning Blueprint. Respondents included teaching and non-teaching principals, as well as some principals who were acting or relieving. The first wave of the survey was conducted in Term 1, 2016 with a second wave in Term 1, 2017. Principals in the 2016 survey frame were not necessarily included in the survey frame in 2017.

The survey included five questions related to the PSL role, including:

- understanding of the PSL role
- areas in which support was required
- sources of support
- PSL specific support
- PSL helpfulness.

In 2016, the section of the survey concerning PSLs were answered by 529 of the 1,270 principals surveyed. In 2017, the section of the survey concerning PSLs was answered by 669 of the 1,190 principals surveyed. Given that there are over 2,200 public schools in NSW, these samples represent around one quarter of all principals (24% in 2016, 30% in 2017).

Note that the results are indicative only of the experiences and perceptions of the survey respondents as opposed to those of all principals in NSW.

3.4 Key findings

3.4.1 Summary of evaluation findings

Most school principals said they were aware of the PSL position and stated that they had a good understanding of the PSL role.

Principals indicated that they received support from PSLs in a variety of areas, but most frequently in relation to their school plan. This included support developing the plan, setting milestones and monitoring programs against the plan. Principals also frequently received support from PSLs in self-assessment against the School Excellence Framework. These have all been key focus areas for PSLs, and this survey data suggests they have successfully assisted many principals in these areas.

For those principals who reported receiving support from PSLs, this support was often quite substantial and generally viewed as being very helpful across a range of topic areas. Overall, PSLs were perceived by principals as a valuable source of support, alongside their Director and other principal colleagues.

Two key areas for consideration in the focus of PSL support are:

- *Using data for planning and evaluation* – Around half of the surveyed principals in 2017 said they needed support in using quantitative data (58%) and qualitative data (49%) for planning and evaluation purposes. Although around one third of these principals reported receiving support from PSLs in this area (36% for quantitative data and 33% for qualitative data), however a similar proportion said they had no support from any source (30% for quantitative data, 37% for qualitative).
- *Managing work-life balance* – The main area in which principals felt they did not receive support was in managing work-life balance. Approximately half of the principals surveyed in 2017 (48%) indicated that they needed support in this area. Of these principals, over half (56%) said they received no support from anyone on this issue. Those who were supported in this aspect of the role mostly cited a principal at another school as their main source of support (28%); neither PSLs (8%) nor Directors (14%) featured heavily as sources of support on this. Although the PSL role is designed to support the wellbeing of principals, their focus is on developing efficient and sustainable management practices. A future direction for PSLs could involve additional support for principals in techniques that will promote a healthy work-life balance.

3.4.2 Understanding of the PSL role

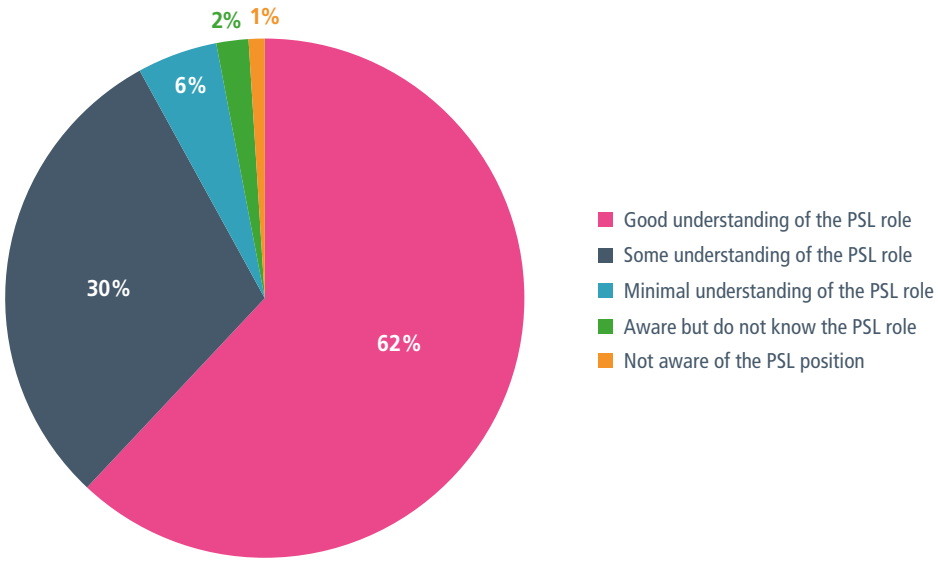
Principals were asked to indicate the extent of their understanding about the role of PSLs. The data presented here (Figure 3.1) is from the 2017 survey; 2016 data is included in Appendix C. The proportions are similar from 2016 to 2017.

Figure 3.1:

Principals' understanding of the PSL role

Source: CESE Principal Survey 2017

The total percentage on this figure does not add up to 100% because some of the percentages have been rounded up.



As indicated in Figure 3.1, almost all principals (99%) were aware of the PSL position. The majority of principals felt they had a good understanding of the role (62%), or at least some understanding of it (30%).

3.4.3 Support needs of principals

Principals were asked to indicate the areas in which they felt they needed support (over the last 12 months) to increase their leadership skills. These areas were presented in a random order in the survey, but are shown in descending order of need for 2017 in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1:

Areas of support required by principals

Areas of support required by principals	2016	2017
Setting milestones and monitoring programs against your school plan	76%	↓ 62%
Self-assessment against the School Excellence Framework (SEF)	74%	↓ 60%
Using quantitative data sources for planning and evaluation	58%	58%
Developing your school plan	71%	↓ 53%
Managing difficult or contentious issues	47%	50%
Using qualitative methods for planning and evaluation (e.g., surveys, interviews, focus groups, case studies)	49%	49%
Managing work-life balance	47%	48%
Self-reflection and your development as a leader	44%	44%
Leading improvement, innovation, and change	44%	41%
Staff development and performance management	43%	↓ 36%
Managing school resources	23%	↑ 27%
Leading teaching and learning at your school	29%	26%
Engaging and working with families and the community	25%	22%
Collaboration with other schools	21%	21%

Note: arrow indicates a change of four percentage points or more

As displayed in Figure 3.2, principals were more likely to need support with:

- setting milestones and monitoring programs against their school plan (62%)
- self-assessment against the School Excellence Framework (SEF) (60%)
- using quantitative data sources for planning and evaluation (58%).

Areas in which support was less often required included:

- collaboration with other schools (21%)
- engaging and working with families and the community (22%)
- leading teaching and learning (26%).

From 2016 to 2017 there was a significant change in principals' support requirements in the following areas:

- A decline in support needs for:
  - developing their school plan (71% to 53%)
  - setting milestones and monitoring programs against their school (76% to 62%)
  - staff development and performance (43% to 36%)
  - self-assessment against the School Excellence Framework (SEF) (74% to 60%).
- An increase in support needs for:
  - managing school resources (23% to 27%).

The change in support requirements from 2016 to 2017 could reflect that principals had received support over the earlier period and no longer required assistance in 2017, or the cyclical nature of certain aspects of the School Excellence Policy (e.g. in developing the school plan and SEF self-assessment).

3.4.4 Provision of support by PSLs

Focus and extent of PSL support

For each of the areas in which principals indicated they needed support, they were next asked who had provided them with support in the last 12 months. Principals could select more than one response (i.e. they could indicate multiple sources of support) from the following options:

- Principal, School Leadership
- Director, Public Schools NSW
- external leadership mentor/coach
- a principal at another school
- a colleague within my school.

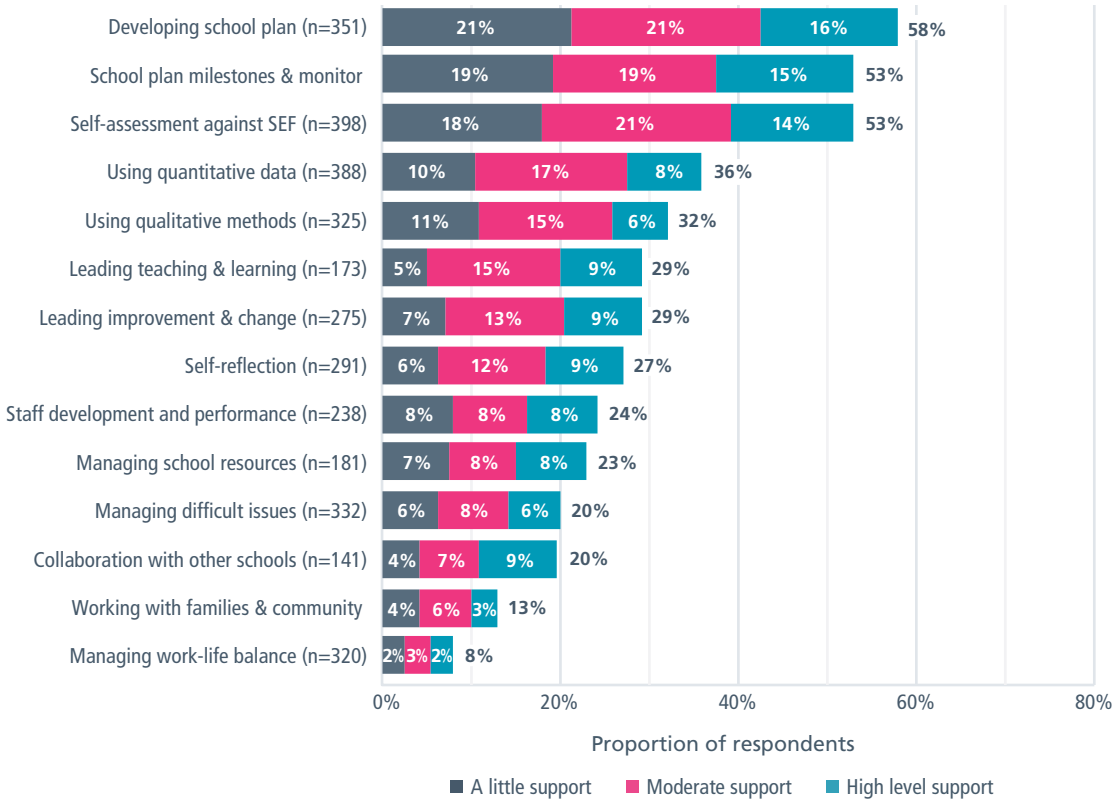
Principals could also indicate if they had not received support by selecting the option 'I was not supported in this area'.

For those principals who stated they needed support in each area, Figure 3.2 illustrates the percentage who received support from a PSL, and the extent of this support. Data from 2016 is presented in Appendix C.

Figure 3.2:

Level of support received from PSLs, among principals who required support in each area

Source: CESE Principal Survey 2017



As illustrated in Figure 3.2, among those principals who indicated they needed support, the areas where most PSL support was most prominent were:

- developing the school plan (58%)
- setting milestones and monitoring programs against the school plan (53%)
- self-assessment against the School Excellence Framework (SEF) (53%).

Among those principals who needed support, the areas where PSL support was least prominent were in: managing work-life balance (8%); engaging and working with families and the community (13%); collaboration with other schools (20%); and managing difficult issues (20%).

Helpfulness of PSL support

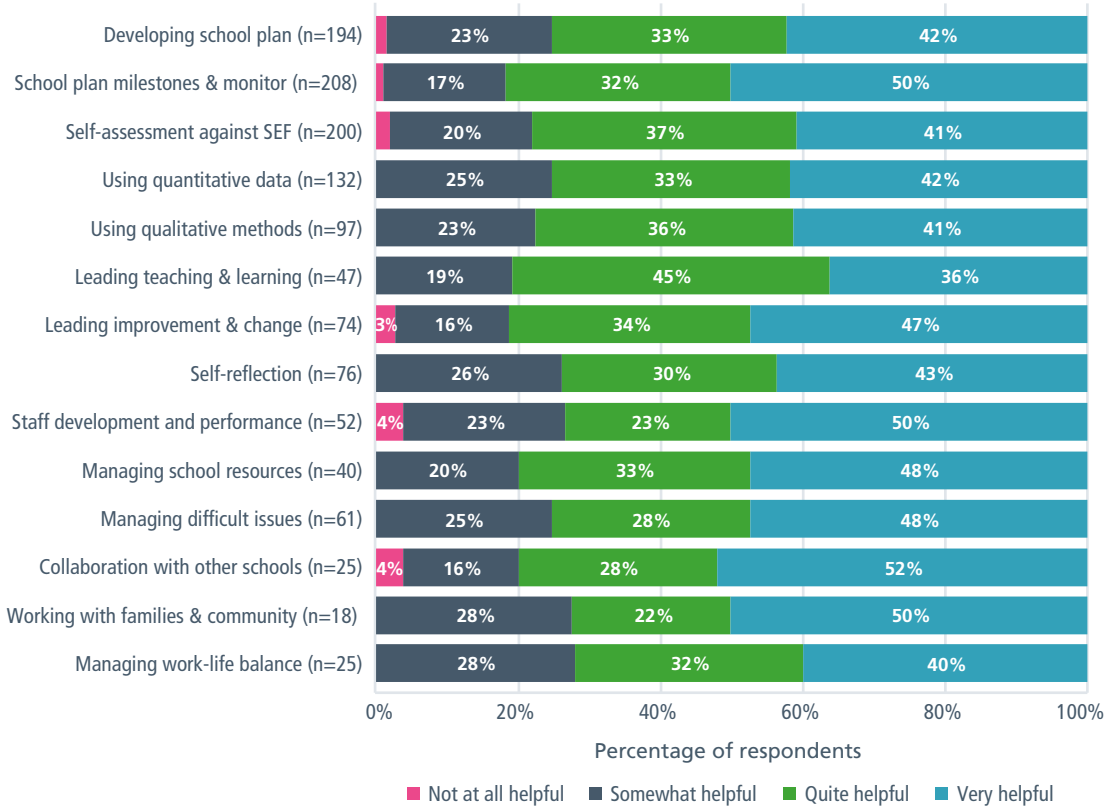
For each of the areas in which principals received PSL support, they were asked how helpful they found this support to be.

Figure 3.3 displays the responses from the 2017 survey. Data from the 2016 survey is included in Appendix C. Once again, although Figure 3.3 presents the proportion of responses for each level of helpfulness, it should be noted that the number of respondents varies across different areas.

Figure 3.3:

Helpfulness of PSLs, among principals who received support from a PSL

Source: CESE Principal Survey 2017



Across all areas, principals thought PSLs were very helpful. This indicates that PSLs have a valuable contribution to make on a range of principal support needs, including areas of need that are less common among principals (e.g. collaborating with other schools and working with families and community), or where PSLs have so far been less involved (e.g. managing difficult issues and self-reflection).

3.4.5 Support from sources other than PSLs

Table 3.2 lists the other providers of support on each area. It shows that the other main sources of support for principals were Directors, PSNSW, and principals at other schools.

- Directors were particularly present in helping principals manage difficult or contentious issues (67%), self-reflection and development as a leader (56%), leading improvement, innovation, and change (45%), and staff development and performance management (45%).
- Principals at other schools were key sources of support in collaboration with other schools (62%), managing difficult issues (42%) and developing the school plan (41%).

Table 3.2:

Areas of support provided by sources other than PSLs (sorted by frequencies in the Director column)

Areas of support	Director, PSNSW	Other principal	Colleague	External mentor	Not Supported
Managing difficult issues (n=332)	67%	42%	19%	7%	10%
Self-reflection (n=291)	56%	31%	16%	12%	16%
Leading improvement & change (n=275)	45%	35%	25%	10%	17%
Staff develop. and performance (n=238)	45%	35%	24%	8%	18%
Developing school plan (n=351)	36%	41%	32%	7%	8%
Leading teaching & learning (n=173)	36%	34%	29%	10%	17%
Collaboration with other schools (n=141)	28%	62%	11%	6%	16%
School plan milestones & monitor. (n=414)	22%	32%	32%	7%	13%
Self-assessment against SEF (n=398)	20%	29%	24%	6%	18%
Working with families & community (n=147)	20%	24%	29%	10%	33%
Using quantitative data (n=388)	19%	21%	20%	7%	30%
Managing school resources (n=181)	16%	36%	22%	15%	27%
Using qualitative methods (n=325)	15%	22%	20%	10%	37%
Managing work-life balance (n=320)	14%	28%	13%	8%	56%

One thing this table highlights is that even though PSLs are the main sources of support for schools on developing schools plans (58%), milestoning and monitoring (53%) and self assessment (53%) (Figure 3.2), they are not the only voices in this space. One quarter to one third of principals (also) receive input from their Director, principals, and/or colleagues in these areas. This has important implications for how the department can achieve consistent messaging and support around the School Excellence policy, which is a dynamic and complex space.

Table 3.2 also shows the proportion of principals who were not supported in each area.

- Managing work-life balance was the main area in which principals felt unsupported. It was identified as a support need by 48% of principals (Table 3.1), 56% of whom said they did not receive support from any source.
- Data analysis is another, both qualitative (37% unsupported) and quantitative (30% unsupported).
- Working with families and the community (33% unsupported).
- Managing school resources (27% unsupported).

These gaps in support would be a worthwhile topic of discussion between PSLs and Director, both in terms of the root causes underpinning these needs, and appropriate responses at the system and local level.

3.5 Concluding comments

Findings from this evaluation suggest that Principals are aware of the PSL role and are sourcing help from PSLs in regards to key areas of PSLs' responsibilities such as the development and monitoring of their school plan and self-assessment against the School Excellence Framework.

PSLs are also providing assistance in other areas not specified in the PSL role such as using qualitative and quantitative data, however many Principals are not receiving support in these areas from any sources.

Principals' need for assistance managing work-life balance is not being met by PSLs or by any other sources of support.

Appendix A: The NSW Public School Leadership and Management Credential

Table A1:
Credential Modules

Source: Leadership and High Performance Directorate

Credential Modules		
Module No.	**Module Name**	**Description**
1	Asset management	Candidates will become familiar with the resources available and the required procedures to effectively manage school assets.
2	Core legal issues	Candidates will learn about common legal issues that are encountered by schools and principals.
3	Developing self and others	Candidates will learn about building a collaborative professional learning community that is focused on the continuous improvement of teaching and learning, underpinned by the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers
4	Engaging and working with the community	Candidates will develop a deeper understanding of the clear communication strategies which lead to improved parental and community engagement, enhanced staff morale, and positive consultative decision making.
5	Ethical decision making	Candidates will develop an understanding of ethical leadership and management practice.
6	Industrial relations	Candidates will develop an understanding of managing and responding to workplace issues within an industrial context.
7	Leading and managing the school (currently unavailable)	Candidates will understand the accountabilities of principals, aligned to the nationally agreed professional practices of principals as described in the Australian Professional Standard for Principals and the leadership profiles.
8	Leading learning and teaching	Candidates will develop an understanding of how to lead evidence-based teaching and learning. They will see how leading teaching is located within the School Excellence Framework and research literature. They will also be able to learn from a high value-add school case study.
9	Managing complaints (not available at time of evaluation)	Candidates will develop their knowledge and understanding of what constitutes a complaint, how to manage a complaint and what their responsibilities are so that complaints can be managed effectively.
10	Performance and development	Candidates will understand how to promote and lead a collaborative and supportive culture in their workplace, meet the requirements of the NSW Department of Education Performance and Development Framework and ensure access to quality professional learning for all teachers.
11	Performance improvement	Candidates will understand performance management, procedures for implementing improvement programs and the leadership skills required to do so effectively.
12	Policy implementation and monitoring	Candidates will develop a clearer understanding of what the principal must know and do to align management procedures, processes and policy implementation.
13	Procurement	Candidates will learn how to procure goods and services on behalf of the school, in compliance with the NSW Government and NSW Department of Education Procurement Policy.
14	School excellence	Candidates will develop their understanding of leading school planning and annual reporting. They will understand school self-assessment, external validation, the School Excellence Policy and school development reviews.
15	Staffing in NSW Public Schools	Candidates will be supported to better understand the fundamentals of workforce planning including their legal and ethical responsibilities in managing staffing entitlement including enrolment practices for staffing and the recruitment of permanent, temporary and casual staff.
16	Strategic financial management	Candidates will be familiar with the responsibilities of the principal and some of the resources available to support school financial management practices.
17	Wellbeing for learning	Candidates will build their knowledge of the NSW Department of Education Wellbeing Framework for Schools and be provided with information and advice about key related policies and good practice to support the wellbeing needs of all students in their school.
18	Work health and safety	Candidates will develop an understanding of key WHS information in regards to Injury Management and Return to Work.

Figure A1 illustrates the extent to which each module improved all respondents' level of understanding.

Figure A1:

Improvement in understanding – all respondents

Source: CESE Leadership and Management Credential Survey 2017

The total percentage on this figure does not add up to 100% because some of the percentages have been rounded up.

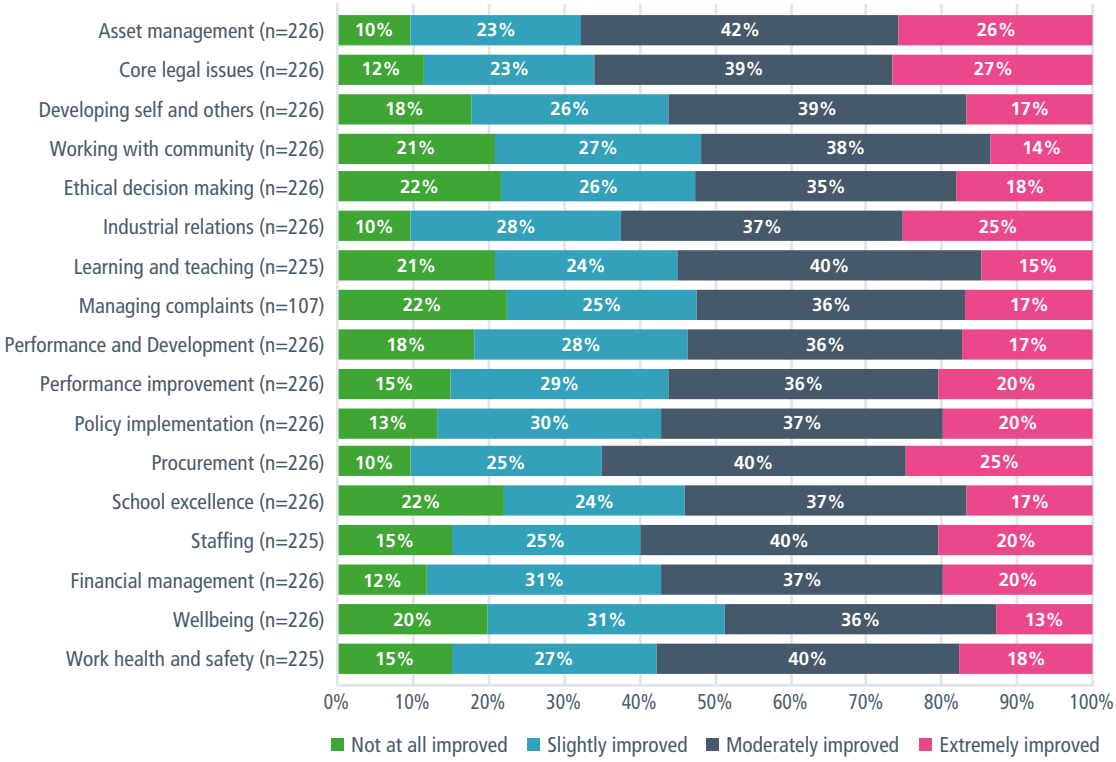


Figure A2 illustrates the extent to which each module improved all respondents' capabilities.

Figure A2:

Improvement in capabilities – all respondents

Source: CESE Leadership and Management Credential Survey 2017

The total percentage on this figure does not add up to 100% because some of the percentages have been rounded up.

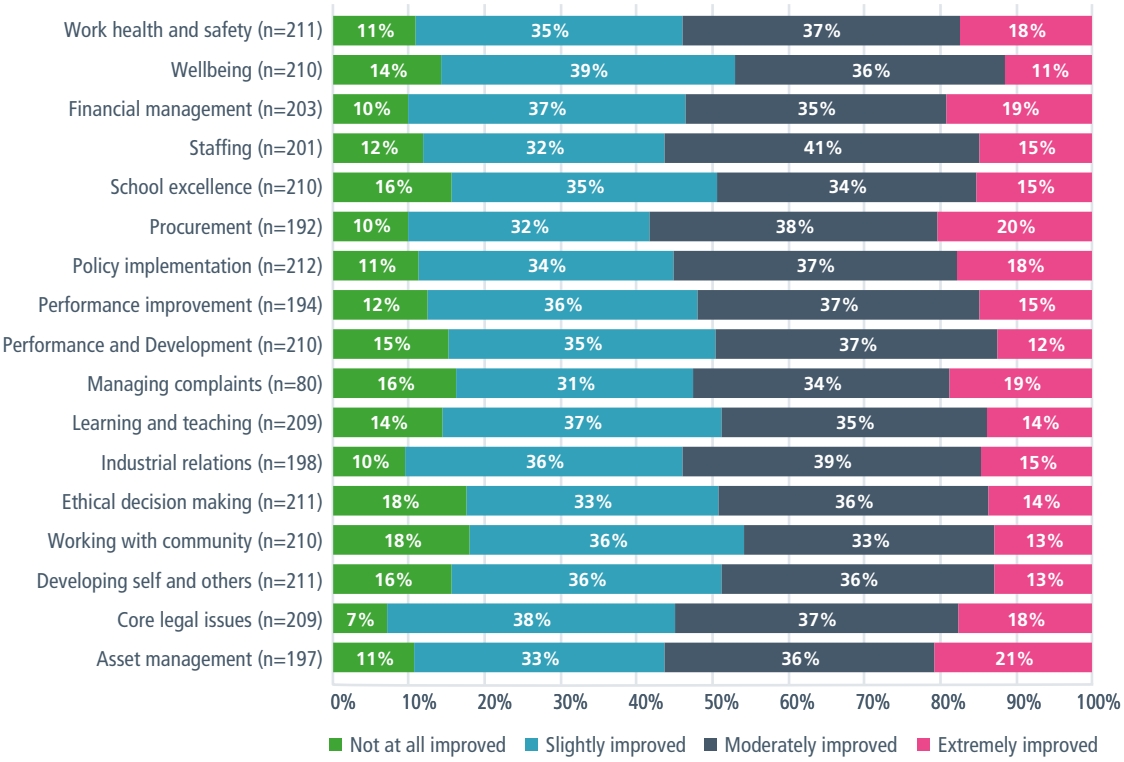


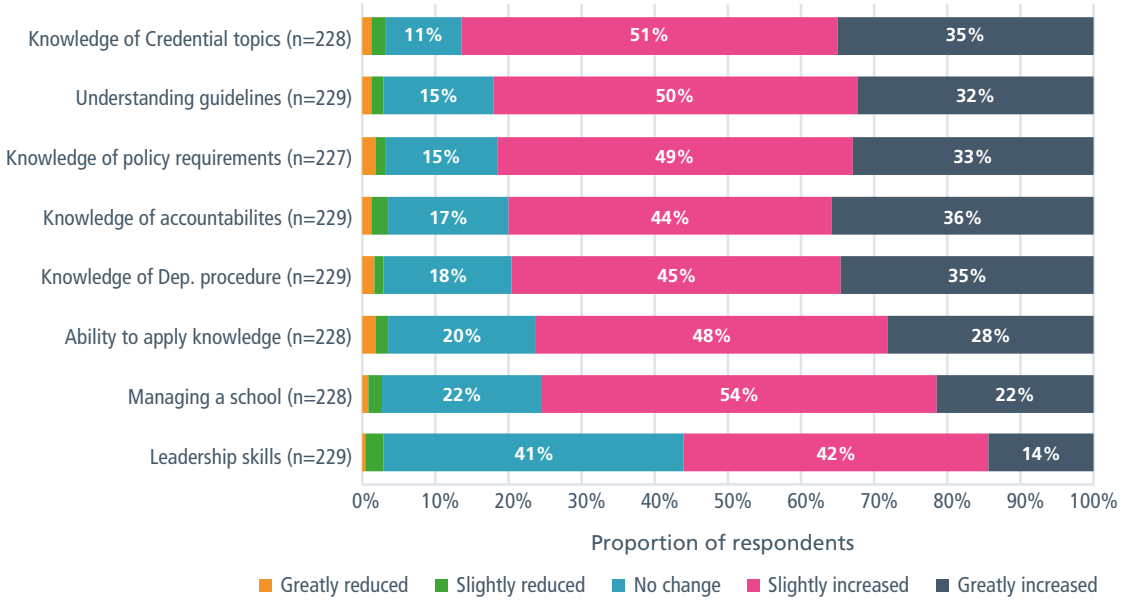
Figure A3 illustrates how the Credential influenced all respondents' confidence.

Figure A3:

Impact on confidence – all respondents

Source: CESE Leadership and Management Credential Survey 2017

The total percentage on this figure does not add up to 100% because some of the percentages have been rounded up.



How useful is the Credential?

The Credential survey asked respondents to indicate how useful the pre-readings and e-learning components were. Findings revealed that 95 per cent of respondents found the pre-readings to be slightly, moderately or extremely useful. Similarly, 97 per cent of respondents found the e-learning components to be slightly, moderately or extremely useful. Additionally, recommended readings were available for a number of modules, with 43 per cent of respondents reading these "sometimes" but only 11 per cent reading these "often".

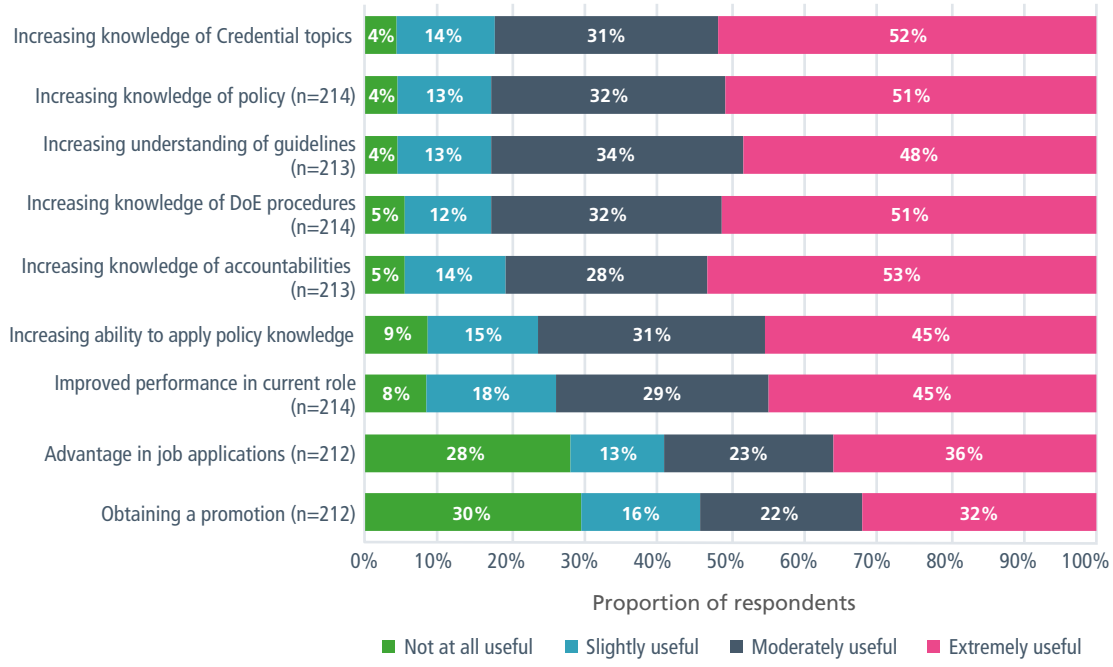
Respondents were also asked to indicate how useful the Credential had been in a number of domains. As Figure A4 shows, respondents found the Credential most useful in the areas in which it was designed to improve knowledge and understanding. These include increasing knowledge of Credential topics, policy requirements, guidelines, procedures and accountabilities. These areas are also consistent with the reasons respondents gave for completing the Credential. This suggests that the Credential is meeting the needs of those who have completed it.

Figure A4:

Usefulness of credential

Source: CESE Leadership and Management Credential Survey 2017

The total percentage on this figure does not add up to 100% because some of the percentages have been rounded up.



Suggestions for additional modules

Survey respondents were asked to suggest other topics that could be included in the Credential. They could select up to 3 options that included Data Security and Confidentiality, Fair Warning-Fair Action and Evaluative Thinking. Of these, 51 per cent (n = 120) of participants selected Fair Warning-Fair Action, 48 per cent (n = 113) selected Evaluative Thinking, and 32 per cent (n = 76) selected Data Security and Confidentiality. Respondents could also offer their own suggestions and 35 respondents entered their specific suggestions. These suggestions covered a vast range of different topics. They included:

- managing difficult conversations and contentious issues
- SAP financial management
- rural or remote school management
- wellbeing including principal and staff wellbeing
- time management
- how to best support early career teachers.

Unexpected outcomes

Twelve survey respondents (14%) answered the survey question about unexpected outcomes by reporting their surprise at the amount of stress and frustration they experienced while completing the Credential. This frustration surrounded the assessment process, links that did not work and grammatical errors. They made comments such as:

"It was a little frustrating that many of the links we were directed to simply didn't work." - Survey respondent

"It created enormous amounts of stress for leaders attempting to complete the Credential because the assessment was so poor." - Survey respondent

"The actual questions that are asked in the test section are so obscure that it makes the process a bit ridiculous … we are scrambling around to complete a matching activity that does not make sense to anyone including a Director who was supporting us through the process." - Survey respondent

Appendix B: The Leadership Development Initiative

Applications

Hearing about the LDI

Respondents were asked to indicate all the different ways that they had heard about the LDI program (multiple options could be selected). Seventy five percent of participants heard about the LDI through SchoolBiz, followed by 18 per cent who heard about the LDI from the principal at their school. Similarly, 63 per cent of mentors heard about the LDI through SchoolBiz, followed by 18 per cent who heard about the LDI from a colleague.

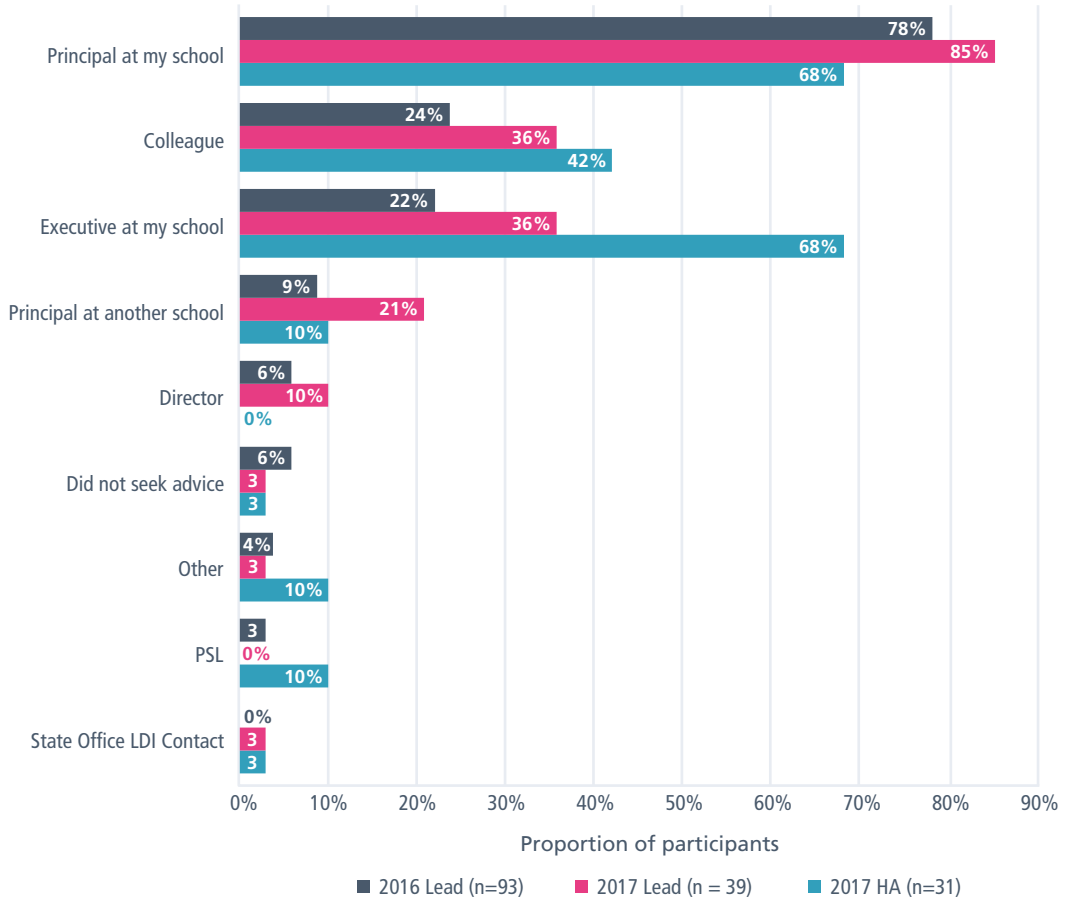
Readiness to apply

Participants: Participants were asked to indicate who they had sought advice from (if anyone) to ascertain their readiness to apply to the LDI (multiple responses could be selected). Figure B1 indicates that Lead participants are mainly seeking advice from the principal at their school, followed by colleagues and other executive members at the school. Highly Accomplished participants are mainly seeking advice from the principal at their school or from another member of the executive at their school, followed by colleagues.

Figure B1:

Who participants sought advice from to ascertain their readiness to apply

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017

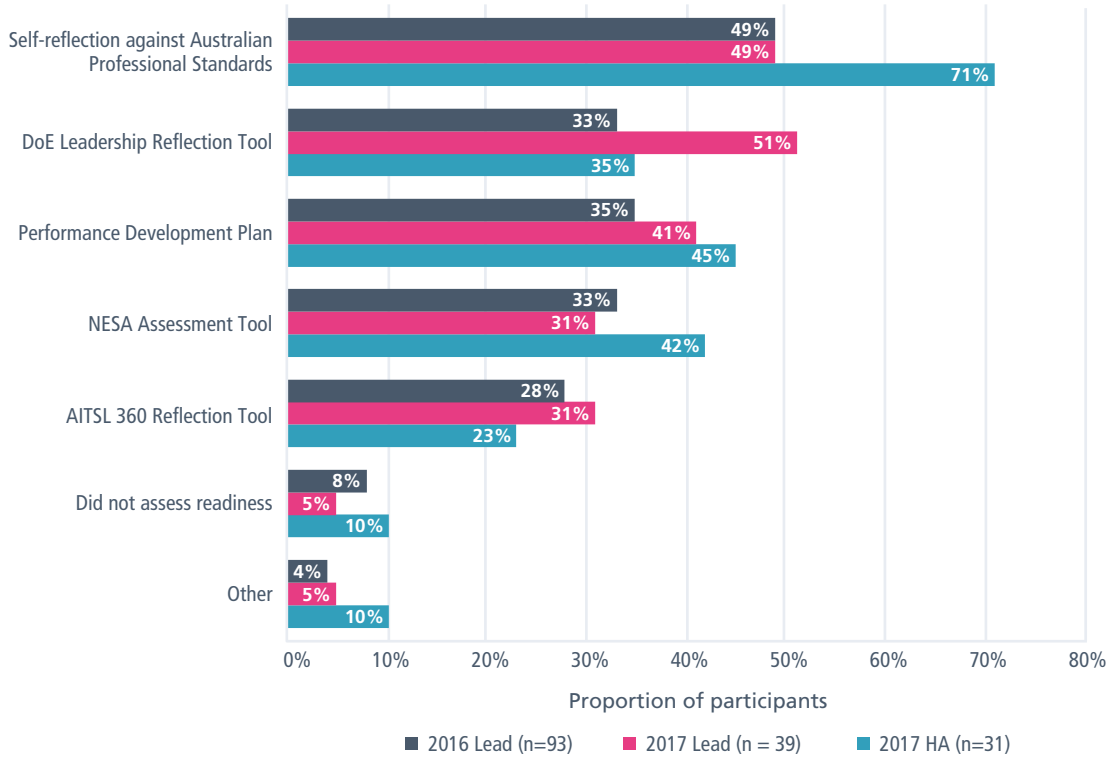


Participants were also asked if they had used any specific techniques or tools to assess their readiness to apply (multiple options could be selected). As illustrated in Figure B2, Lead participants were mainly using self-reflection against the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* and the department's Leadership Reflection Tool. Highly Accomplished participants also used self-reflection against the *Australian Professional Standard for Teachers*, followed by their Performance and Development Plan, the NESA assessment tool and the department's Leadership Reflection Tool.

Figure B2:

Techniques used by participants to ascertain their readiness to apply

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017



Mentors: Mentors were also asked to indicate who they had sought advice from (if anyone) to ascertain their readiness to apply to the LDI (multiple responses could be selected).

Of the 37 2016 Lead mentors who responded to this survey question:

- 11 did not seek advice from anyone
- eight sought advice from a Director
- seven sought advice from the principal at their school.

Of the 15 2017 Lead mentors who responded to this survey question:

- five did not seek advice from anyone
- five sought advice from a Director
- four sought advice from the principal at their school and four sought advice from a colleague.

Of the 15 2017 HA mentors who responded to this survey question:

- eight sought advice from the principal at their school
- five did not seek advice from anyone
- two sought advice from a principal at another school and two sought advice from a colleague.

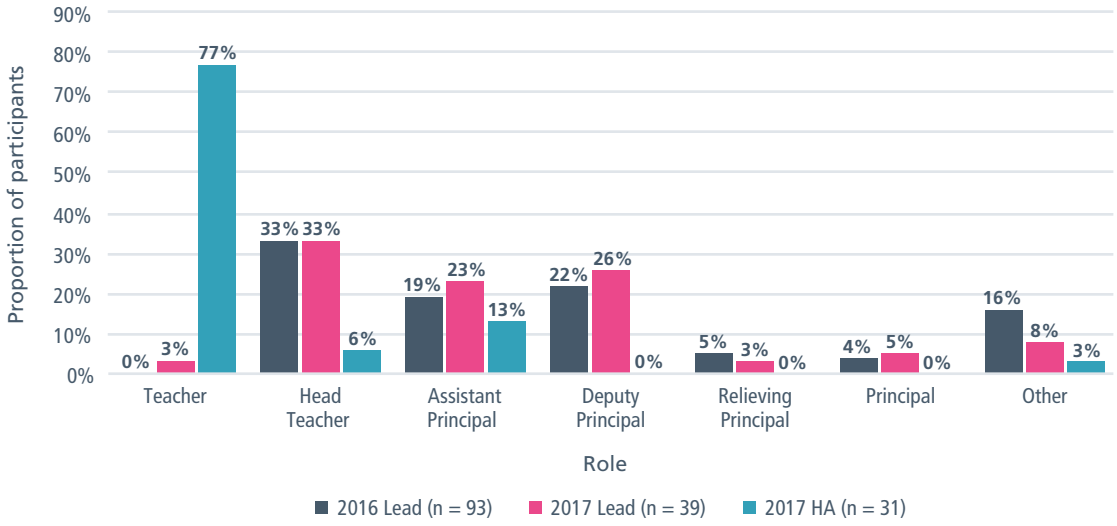
Characteristics of Participants and Mentors

Current role

Participants: Figure B3 displays the current role of 2016 and 2017 LDI participants. The majority of HA participants are in a teacher role, whereas Lead participants are distributed across head teacher and principal-related roles.

Figure B3:
Current role of LDI participants

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017



Mentors: Mentors were also asked about their current role.

Of the 36 2016 Lead mentors who responded to this survey question:

- 26 were principals
- five were deputy principals.

Of the 15 2017 Lead mentors who responded to this survey question:

- eight were principals
- five were deputy principals.

Of the 15 2017 HA mentors who responded to this survey question:

- four were deputy principals
- four were head teachers
- three were principals
- three were assistant principals.

The majority of Lead mentors are in a principal or deputy principal role, whereas HA mentors are distributed across different roles.

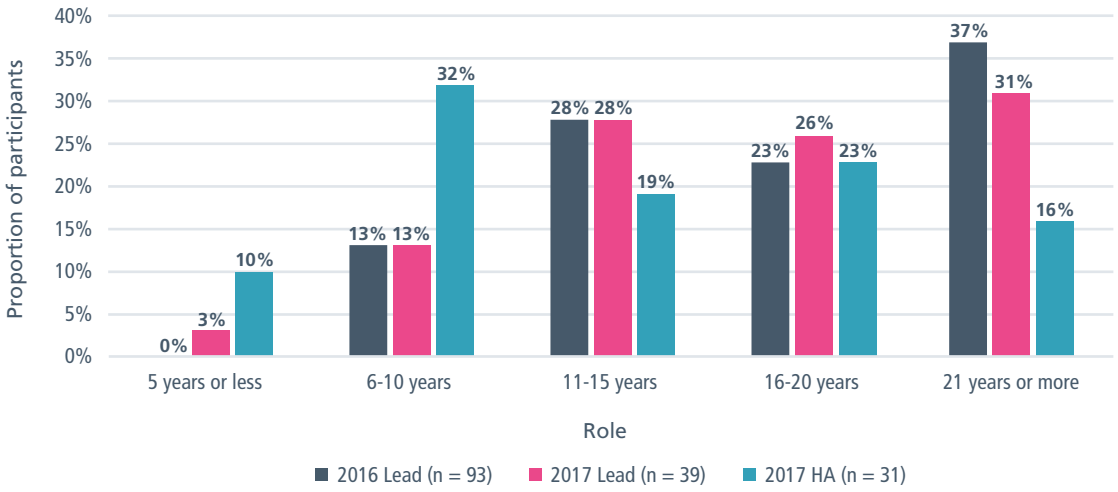
Length of time actively working in the teaching profession

Participants: Figure B4 displays the number of years that LDI participants had been actively working in the teaching profession. The majority of both Lead and HA participants have been teaching for over 10 years.

Figure B4:

Length of time participants had actively worked in the teaching profession

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017



Mentors: Mentors also indicated how long they had been actively working in the teaching profession.

Of the 36 2016 Lead mentors who responded to this survey question:

- 25 had been working in the profession for 21 years or more
- eight had been working in the profession for 16-20 years.

Of the 15 2017 Lead mentors who responded to this survey question:

- 10 had been working in the profession for 21 years or more
- four had been working in the profession for 16-20 years.

Of the 15 2017 HA mentors who responded to this survey question:

- 11 had been working in the profession for 21 years or more
- two had been working in the profession for 16-20 years.

Almost all mentors have actively been in the teaching profession for over 15 years. This suggests that mentors who were accepted into the LDI were those with extensive teaching experience.

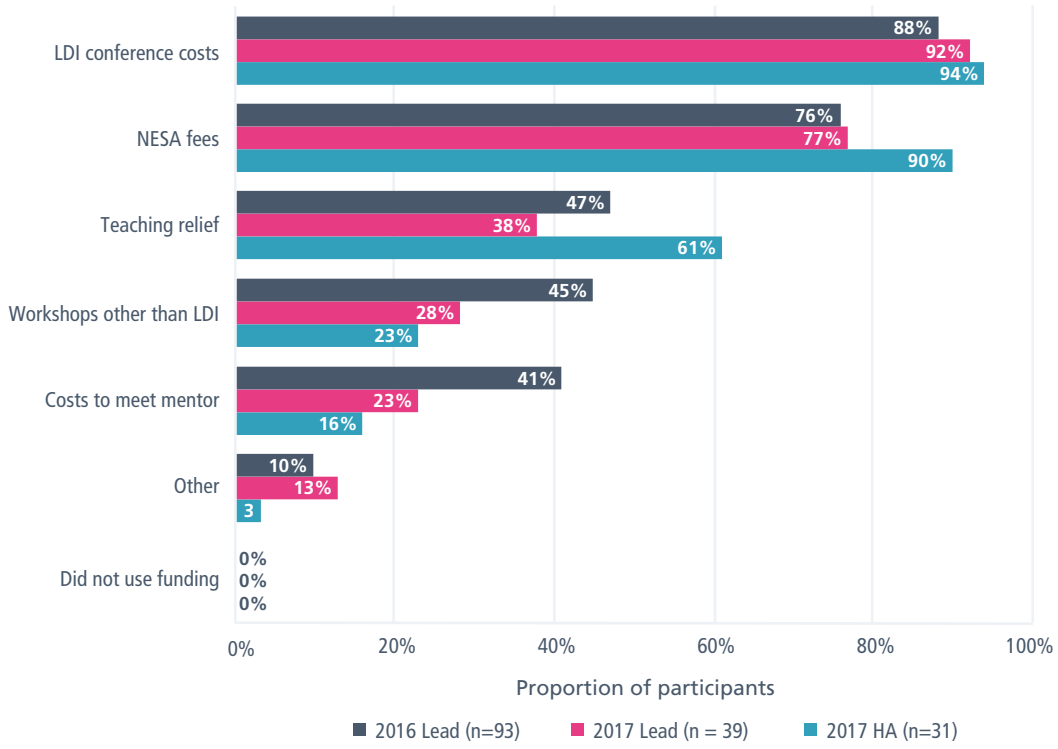
Use of funding

Participants: Participants indicated some of the ways that they had used their LDI funding (multiple options could be selected). As shown in Figure B5, both Lead and HA participants primarily used their funding for expenses relating to the LDI conferences (including travel, accommodation and teaching relief) and NESA fees.

Figure B5:

Participants' use of funding

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017



Mentors: Mentors also indicated some of the ways that they had used their LDI funding (multiple options could be selected).

Of the 37 2016 Lead mentors who responded to this survey question:

- 32 used their funding for expenses relating to the LDI conferences (including travel, accommodation and teaching relief)
- 23 used their funding for costs associated with meeting their participant
- 16 used their funding for workshops other than the LDI.

Of the 15 2017 Lead mentors who responded to this survey question:

- 14 used their funding for expenses relating to the LDI conferences (including travel, accommodation, teaching relief)
- 10 used their funding for costs associated with meeting their participant
- two used their funding for workshops other than the LDI.

Of the 15 2017 HA mentors who responded to this survey question:

- 14 used their funding for expenses relating to the LDI conferences (including travel, accommodation and teaching relief)
- eight used their funding for costs associated with meeting their participant.

Thus, the majority of mentors used their funding for expenses relating to the LDI conferences (including travel, accommodation and teaching relief) and for costs associated with meeting their LDI participants.

Mentoring relationships

Participant perspectives

Prior knowledge of mentor: Participants indicated the extent to which they knew their mentor prior to participating in the LDI. In 2016, 20 per cent of Lead participants knew their mentor and in 2017, only six per cent of Lead participants knew their mentor prior to participating. In contrast, 91 per cent of HA participants knew their mentor prior to participating. This is consistent with the way participants and mentors were paired. Wherever possible, Lead participants were paired with a mentor external to their school and HA participants were paired with a mentor from the same school.

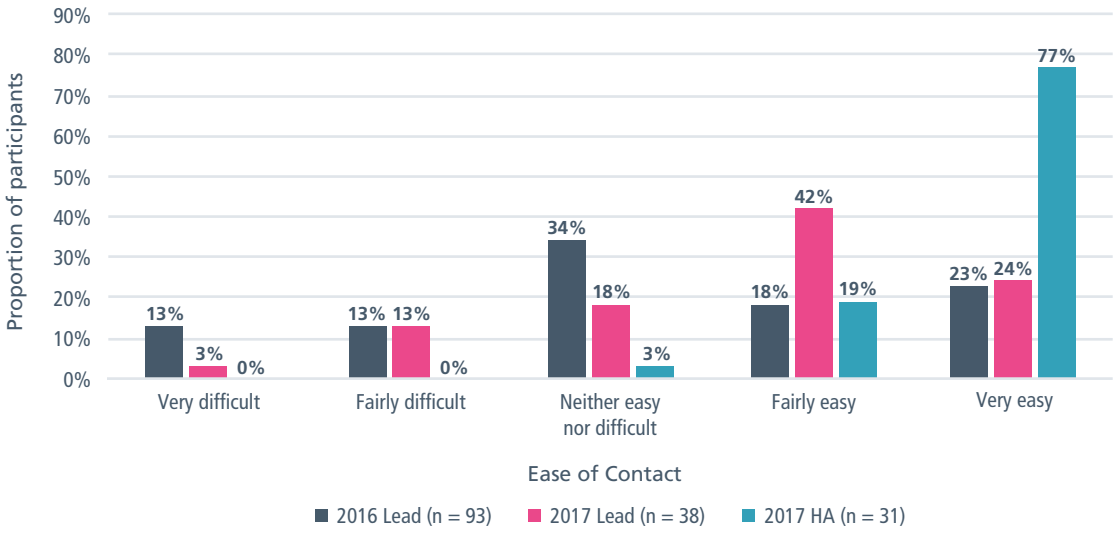
Interactions: Participants indicated the ways in which they interacted with their mentor (multiple options could be selected). Results indicate that Lead participants were primarily interacting with their mentors via email or in face-to-face meetings. All HA participants reported having face-to-face meetings with their mentors and many also interacted with their mentors via email. Notably, 13 per cent of Lead participants in 2016 and 2017 reported having no interactions with their mentors.

Ease of contact: Participants indicated how easy it was to contact their mentor. As shown in Figure B6, less than half of Lead participants are finding it fairly or very easy to contact their mentor. In contrast, the majority of HA participants are finding it fairly or very easy to contact their mentor. However, HA mentors are at the same school as their participants which is likely to make contacting them easier.

Figure B6:

Ease of contacting mentor – participant perspective

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017



Comfort: Participants indicated how comfortable they felt talking to their mentor. Findings revealed that the majority of Lead and HA participants are comfortable talking to their mentor. However, in 2016, 24 per cent of Lead participants said they felt "fairly" or "very" uncomfortable talking to their mentor. For 2017 Lead participants, this dropped to only 6 per cent who felt uncomfortable talking to their mentor.

Other perceptions: Finally, participants were asked to indicate how they perceived their mentor. Response options were based on the myriad ways that mentors might be perceived. These included:

- expert leader
- critical friend
- guide
- coach
- instructional model
- supporter
- counsellor
- trouble shooter.

On the whole, HA participants tended to endorse all of these perceptions of their mentor to a greater extent than Lead participants. Both Lead and HA participants viewed their mentor as an expert leader, critical friend and supporter, with HA participants giving particularly strong indications that they viewed their mentor in these ways. Some of the main differences between Lead and HA participants were:

- Highly Accomplished participants viewed their mentor as a counsellor and trouble shooter to a greater extent than Lead participants
- approximately one quarter of Lead participants did not view their mentor as an instructional model.

Mentor perspectives

Prior knowledge of participant: Mentors indicated the extent to which they knew their participant prior to participating in the LDI. In 2016, 72 per cent of Lead mentors and in 2017, 93 per cent of Lead mentors did not know their participant prior to participating. In contrast, 100 per cent of HA mentors knew their participant prior to the LDI. Again, this is consistent with Lead mentors being paired with a participant external to their school and HA mentors being paired with a participant from the same school.

Frequency of contact with mentor: Mentors indicated how often they had contact with their participant for the purposes of the LDI.

Of the 32 2016 Lead mentors who responded to this survey question:

- 16 had contact with their participant once per month
- 11 had contact with their participant once per term
- four had contact with their participant less than once per term.

Of the 14 2017 Lead mentors who responded to this survey question:

- six had contact with their participant once per month
- four had contact with their participant once per term
- two had contact with their participant less than once per term.

Of the 14 2017 HA mentors who responded to this survey question:

- seven had contact with their participant once per week
- four had contact with their participant once per fortnight
- two had contact with their participant once per month.

Thus, Lead mentors met with their participants once per month or once per term. In contrast, HA mentors met with their participants once per week or once per fortnight.

Interactions: Mentors indicated the ways in which they interacted with their participants (multiple options could be selected).

Of the 37 2016 Lead mentors who responded to this survey question:

- 29 interacted via email
- 23 interacted via face-to-face meetings
- 18 interacted via telephone calls.

Of the 14 2017 Lead mentors who responded to this survey question:

- 13 interacted via email
- nine interacted via telephone calls
- six interacted via face-to-face meetings.

Of the 14 2017 HA mentors who responded to this survey question:

- 14 interacted via face-to-face meetings
- eight interacted via email
- five interacted via text messages.

The majority of Lead mentors interacted with their participants via email. Other common forms of interaction were face-to-face meetings and telephone calls. All HA mentors are interacting with their participants via face-to-face meetings. Other common forms of interaction according to HA mentors are email and text message.

Ease of contact: Mentors indicated how easy it was to contact their participant.

Of the 32 2016 Lead mentors who responded to this survey question:

- six found it very easy to contact their participant
- 14 found it fairly easy to contact their participant
- six found it very difficult to contact their participant.

Of the 14 2017 Lead mentors who responded to this survey question:

- three found it very easy to contact their participant
- three found it neither easy nor difficult to contact their participant
- five found it fairly difficult to contact their participant.

Of the 14 2017 HA mentors who responded to this survey question:

- 10 found it very easy to contact their participant
- two found it fairly easy to contact their participant
- two found it neither easy nor difficult to contact their participant.

Lead mentors are finding it somewhat more difficult to contact their participants than HA mentors. Again, this is likely to be influenced by HA mentors being in the same school as their participants and Lead mentors being in a different school to their participants.

Comfort: Mentors indicated how comfortable they felt talking to their participant. Findings revealed that the majority of Lead and HA mentors are either fairly comfortable or very comfortable talking to their participant.

Self perceptions: Mentors were asked how they perceived themselves in their role as an LDI mentor. Response options were the same as those presented to participants and included:

- expert leader
- critical friend
- guide
- coach
- instructional model
- supporter
- counsellor
- trouble shooter.

Lead mentors tended to view themselves as a supporter, guide and coach. HA mentors tended to view themselves as an expert leader, critical friend, guide and coach.

Perceived Benefits

Participants' perspective

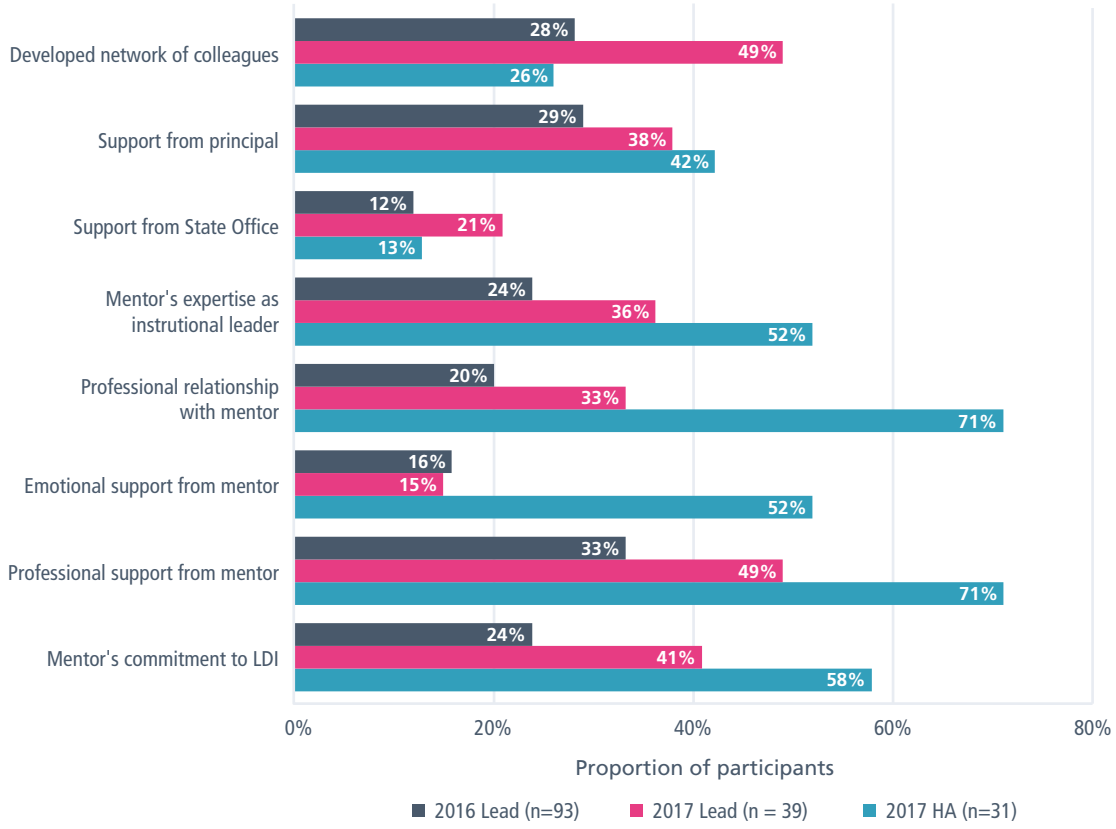
Participants indicated which aspects of the LDI were beneficial for them. These included support-related aspects and professional development aspects.

Support-related benefits: Figure B7 illustrates the support-related aspects that participants found beneficial.

Figure B7:

Support-related benefits – participant perspective

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017



The main support-related aspects that 2016 Lead participants found beneficial were:

- professional support from mentor (33%)
- support from principal (29%)
- developed network of colleagues (28%).

The main support-related aspects that 2017 Lead participants found beneficial were:

- professional support from mentor (49%) and Developed network of colleagues (49%)
- mentor's commitment to the LDI (41%)
- support from principal (38%).

The main support-related aspects that HA participants found beneficial were:

- professional support from mentor (71%) and professional relationship with mentor (71%)
- mentor's commitment to the LDI (58%)
- emotional support from mentor (52%) and mentor's expertise as an instructional leader (52%).

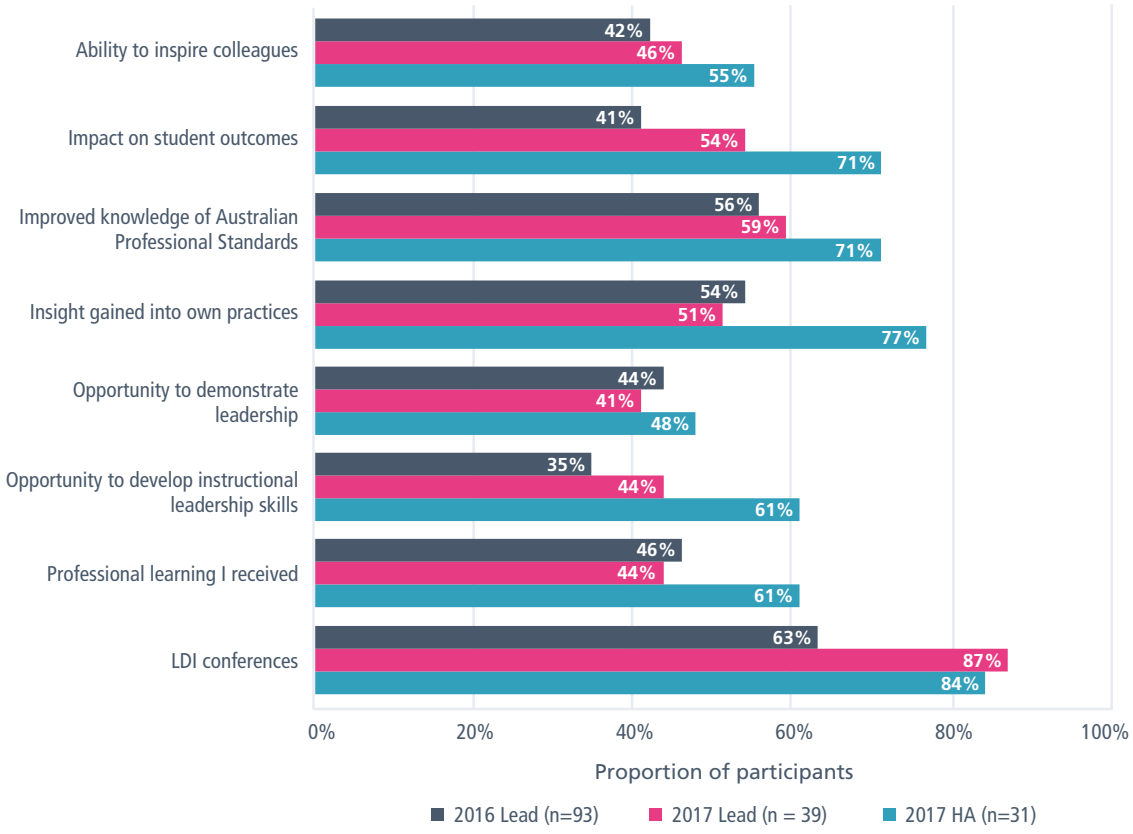
As illustrated in Figure B7, there were some notable differences between Lead and HA participants. More Highly Accomplished than Lead participants found the professional relationship with their mentor beneficial and the emotional support from their mentor beneficial.

Professional development benefits: Figure B8 illustrates the professional development aspects of the LDI that participants found beneficial.

Figure B8:

Professional development benefits – participant perspective

Source: CESE LDI Survey 2017



The main professional development aspects that 2016 Lead participants found beneficial were:

- LDI conferences (63%)
- improvement in knowledge of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (56%)
- insight gained into own practices (54%).

The main professional development aspects that 2017 Lead participants found beneficial were:

- LDI conferences (87%)
- improvement in knowledge of *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (59%)
- impact on student outcomes (54%).

The main professional development aspects that 2017 HA participants found beneficial were:

- LDI conferences (84%)
- insight gained into own practices (77%)
- improved knowledge of *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (71%) and impact on student outcomes (71%).

As shown in Figure B8, more Highly Accomplished than Lead participants said they benefitted from the insight they gained into their own practices. Additionally, although all participants found the LDI conferences beneficial, this has increased for 2017 compared to 2016 participants.

Mentors' perspective

Mentors also indicated which aspects of the LDI were beneficial for them.

Support-related benefits: The perceived support-related benefits for mentors are outlined below.

Of the 37 2016 Lead mentors who responded to this survey question:

- 19 found their professional relationship with their participant beneficial
- 16 found the professional support they provided beneficial
- 15 found their participant's commitment to the LDI beneficial.

Of the 14 2017 Lead mentors who responded to this survey question:

- eight found their professional relationship with their participant beneficial
- five found the professional support they provided beneficial
- five found the emotional support they provided beneficial
- five found their participant's commitment to the LDI beneficial.

Of the 14 2017 HA mentors who responded to this survey question:

- 11 found their professional relationship with their participant beneficial
- nine found the professional support they provided beneficial
- eight found their participant's commitment to the LDI beneficial.

Thus, mentors indicated that their professional relationship with their participant was the most beneficial aspect of being involved in the LDI.

Professional development benefits: The perceived professional development benefits for mentors are outlined below.

Of the 37 2016 Lead mentors who responded to this survey question:

- 24 found the LDI Conferences beneficial
- 15 found the ability to inspire colleagues beneficial
- 14 found the improved knowledge of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* beneficial.

Of the 14 2017 Lead mentors who responded to this survey question:

- 12 found the LDI Conferences beneficial
- 10 found seeing their participant develop instructional leadership skills beneficial
- nine found the professional learning they received beneficial.

Of the 14 2017 HA mentors who responded to this survey question:

- 11 found seeing their participant develop instructional leadership skills beneficial
- 10 found the LDI Conferences beneficial
- eight found the improved knowledge of the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* beneficial.

Overall, 2017 mentors found it more beneficial than 2016 mentors to see their participants develop instructional leadership skills. Further, 2017 Lead mentors found the professional learning they received more beneficial than 2016 Lead mentors.

Appendix C: The Principal, School Leadership Initiative

Understanding of Principal, School Leadership role

(data from 2016 CESE Principal Survey)

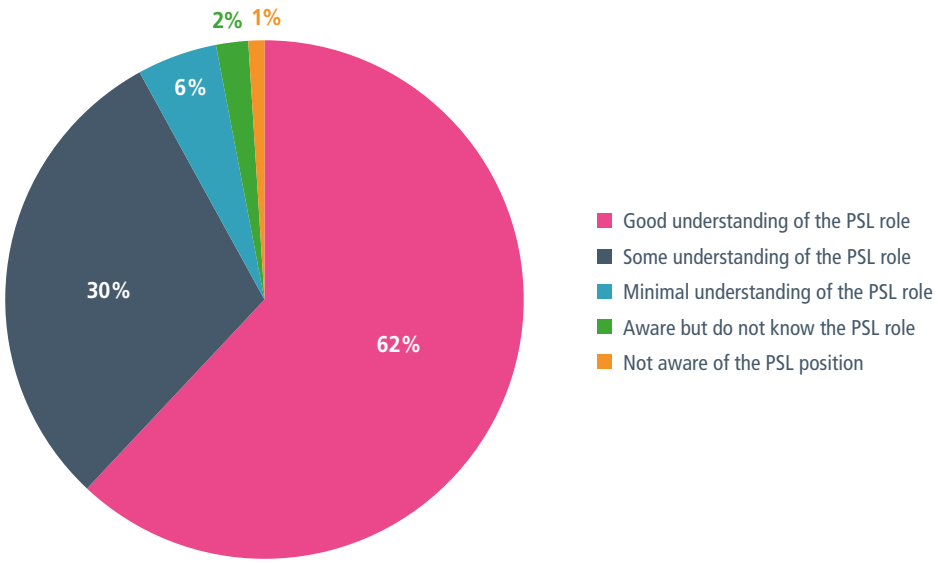
Principals were asked to indicate the extent of their understanding about the role of Principals, School Leadership. Figure C1 shows the extent of principals' understanding about the PSL role in 2016.

Figure C1:

Principals' understanding of PSL role (n=529)

Source: CESE Principal Survey 2016

The total percentage on this figure does not add up to 100% because some of the percentages have been rounded up.



As indicated in Figure C1, almost all principals were aware of the Principal, School Leadership role. Only 1 per cent were not aware of the role. The majority of principals (62%) felt they had a good understanding of the role and 8 per cent were aware of the role but had little or no understanding of the role.

Support provided by Principals, School Leadership

(data from 2016 CESE Principal Survey)

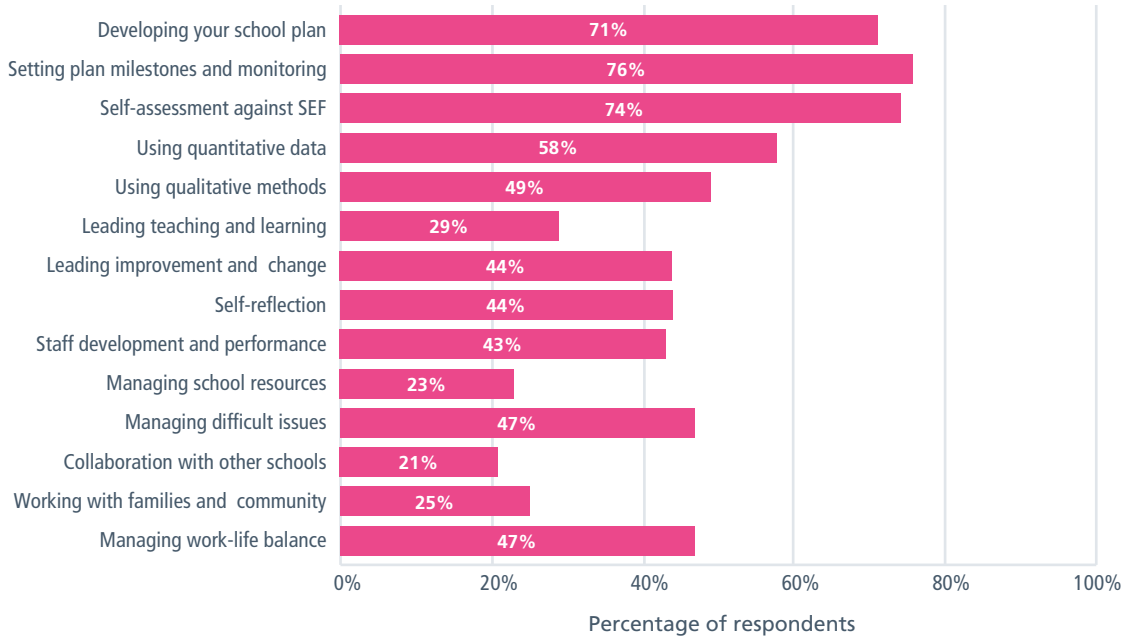
Support required

Principals were asked to indicate the areas in which they felt they needed support (over the last 12 months) to increase their leadership skills. Figure C2 presents the percentage of principals who stated they needed support in each of the areas in 2016.

Figure C2:

Areas where principals indicated leadership support was needed (n=526)

Source: CESE Principal Survey 2016



As displayed in Figure C2, principals felt they needed the most support with:

- setting milestones and monitoring programs against their school plan (76%)
- self-assessment against the School Excellence Framework (SEF) (74%)
- developing their school plan (71%).

Areas in which the least amount of support was required included:

- collaboration with other schools (21%)
- managing school resources (23%)
- engaging and working with families and the community (25%).

Support received from Principals, School Leadership

(data from 2016 CESE Principal Survey)

For each of the areas in which principals indicated they needed support, they were next asked who had provided them with support in the last 12 months. For those principals who stated they needed support in each area, Figure C3 illustrates their sources of support using 2016 data.

As illustrated in Figure C3, among those principals who indicated they needed support, the areas where most PSL support was received were:

- developing the school plan (81%)
- setting milestones and monitoring programs against the school plan (72%)
- self-assessment against the School Excellence Framework (SEF) (57%).

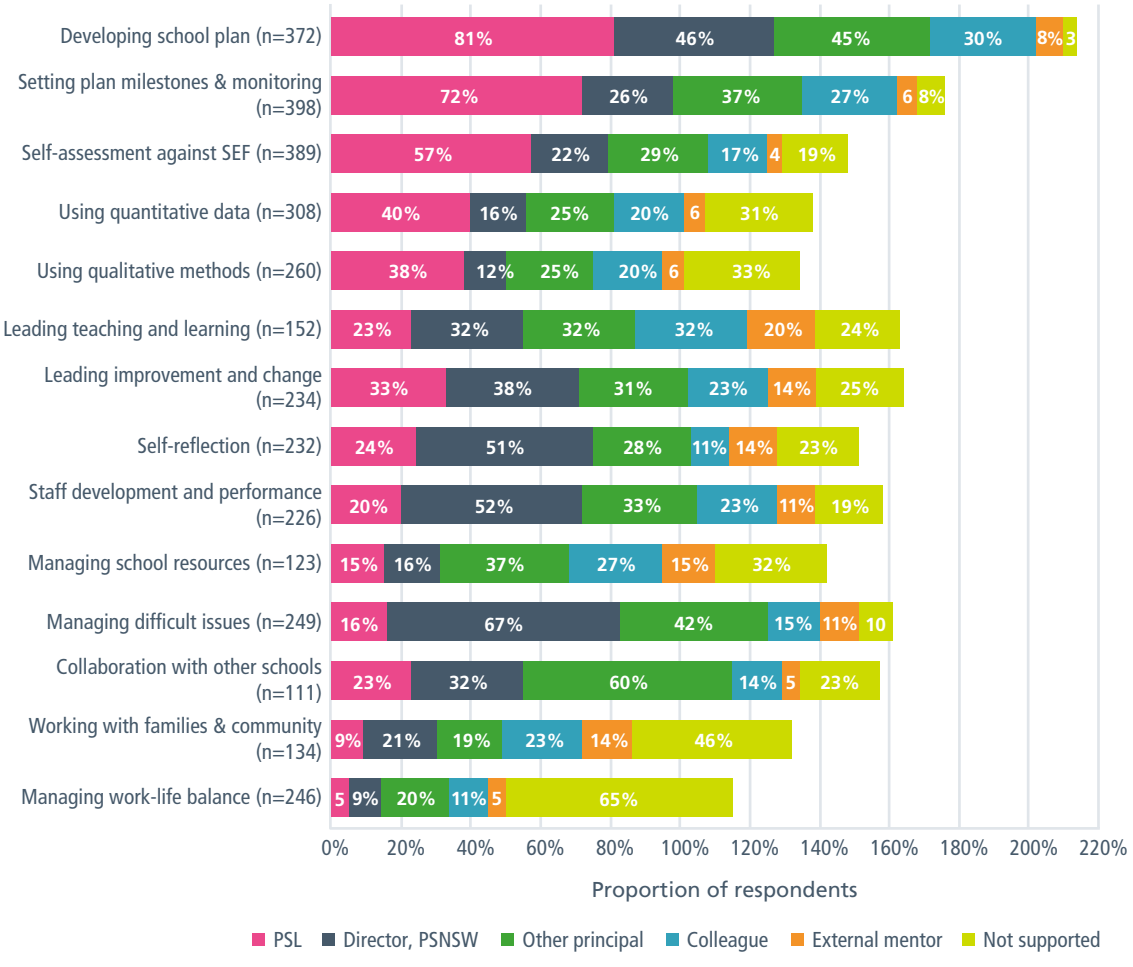
Among those principals who needed support, the areas where the least amount of PSL support was received were in:

- managing work-life balance (5%)
- engaging and working with families and the community (9%)
- managing school resources (15%).

Figure C3:

Sources of support, among principals who needed support in each area

Source: CESE Principal Survey 2016



Level of support received from Principals, School Leadership

(data from 2016 CESE Principal Survey)

For each of the areas in which principals indicated they had received support from a Principal, School Leadership, they were asked how much support they had received in the last 12 months from any Principal, School Leadership. Figure C4 presents the level of support principals said they had received from PSLs.

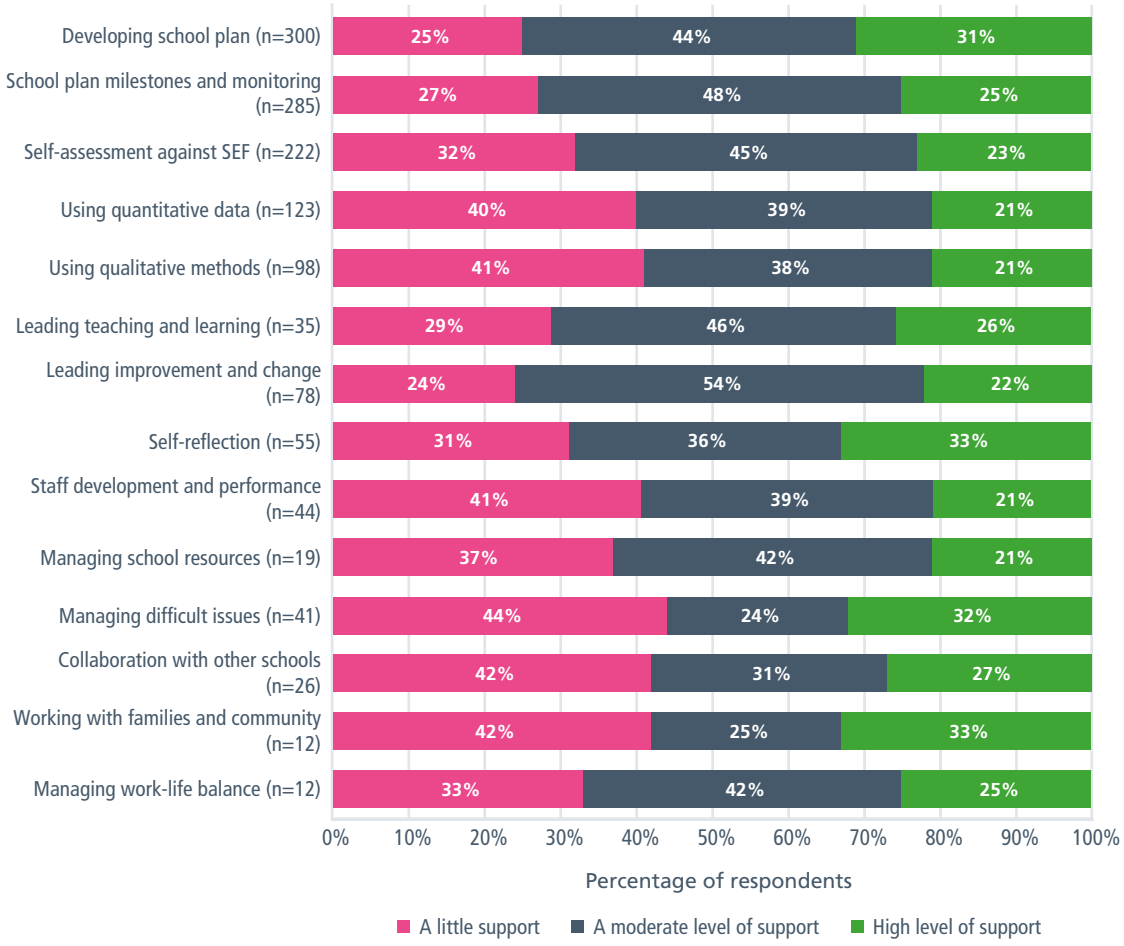
The top areas where principals received a moderate or high level of support from PSLs include:

- leading improvement, innovation and change (76% received moderate or high support)
- developing the school plan (75% received moderate or high support)
- setting milestones and monitoring programs against the school plan (73% received moderate or high support).

Figure C4:

Level of support received from PSLs, among principals who received support from a PSL in each area

Source: CESE Principal Survey 2016



Helpfulness of Principals, School Leadership

(data from 2016 CESE Principal Survey)

For each of the areas in which principals indicated they needed support, they were asked how helpful they found the support they received from Principals, School Leadership. Figure C5 illustrates how helpful principals found the support they received from PSLs.

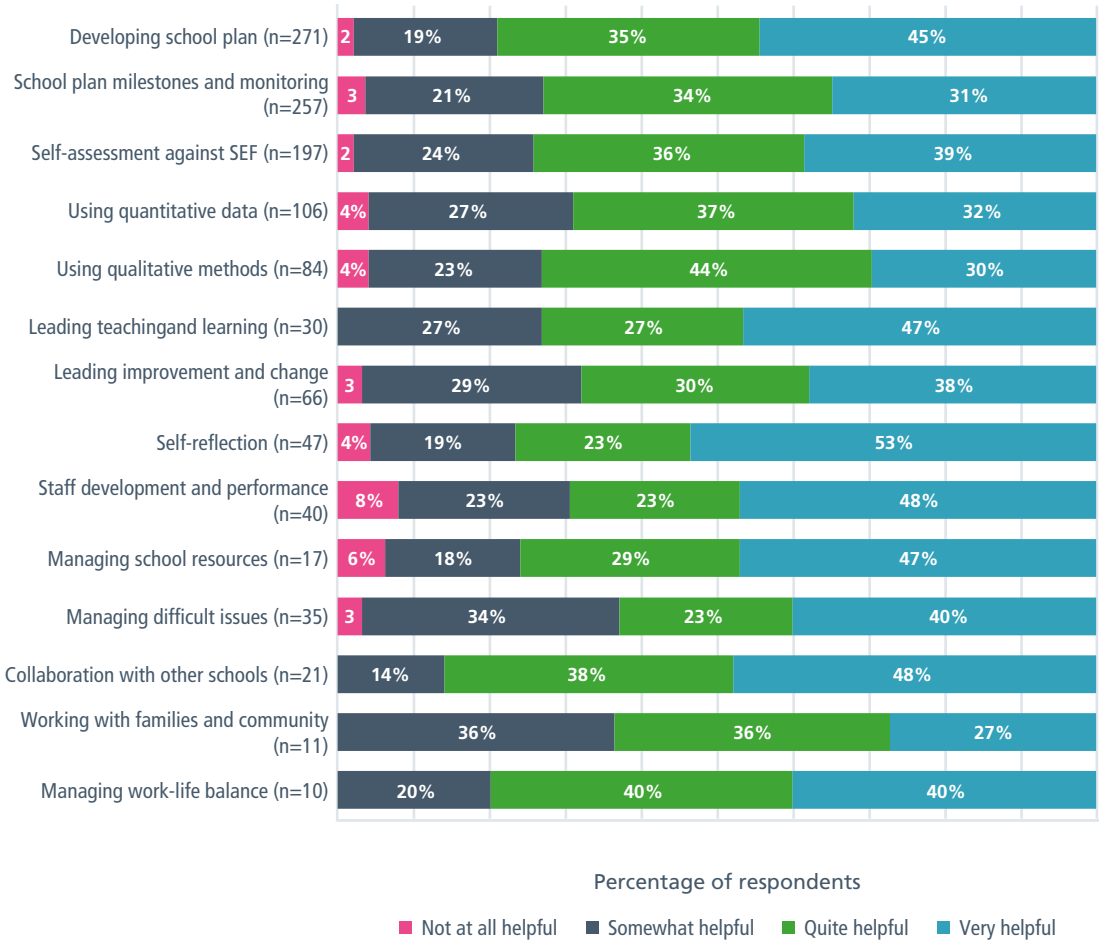
Across almost all areas, principals thought PSLs were very helpful. In the areas where principals said they had received the most support (the first three rows), PSLs were considered most helpful with developing the school plan.

Figure C5:

Helpfulness of PSLs, among principals who received support from a PSL in each area

Source: CESE Principal Survey 2016

The total percentage on this figure does not add up to 100% because some of the percentages have been rounded up.



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