

# **The Impact of COVID-19 on the UK EAP sector**

## **BALEAP commissioned report**

### **The project**

The COVID-19 situation affected EAP provision in higher education over a substantial proportion of the 19/20 academic year. During this time, many organisations and EAP practitioners had to make significant adjustments to programmes. This presented many challenges with steep learning curves for teachers, the need for student training for online delivery, practicalities of changing processes and the difficulties of transitioning to online assessments and the resulting questions relating to testing validity.

While many of the discussions on the BALEAP discussion list have focused on aspects of teaching, technology and testing, there is currently no research to examine the impact that COVID-19 has had on the UK EAP sector.

This BALEAP data-based project seeks to address this gap by collecting data from EAP professionals about the immediate response to COVID-19 (March – August 2020). The aim is to collect and analyse data from across the EAP sector including Pre-Sessional, Pathway and EAP/ESP provision in a range of UK Higher Education institutions. It is hoped that this data can be helpful to provide a picture of the ways in which organisations delivering EAP responded and managed delivery during this initial period.

### **The role**

Proposals are invited from researchers and/or EAP practitioners to undertake a research project on behalf of BALEAP. The role would be paid for the equivalent of full time work for a period of 3-4 months (most likely to be November – January/February). Proposals could be from an individual or a joint proposal where the project might be split into two 0.5 freelancers (note that this needs to be made clear in the proposal). Funding of up to £12,000 is available and information about how to apply is at the end of this document.

Interested parties are encouraged to get in contact before submitting a proposal to find out more (please refer to the contact information at the end of this document).

All proposals need to be received by no later than 4pm Monday 26<sup>th</sup> October.

### **Provisional title**

The impact of COVID-19 on the EAP sector: An examination of how organisations delivering EAP were affected and responded in terms of academic delivery and operational procedures.

### **Intended output of the research**

The intended output is a report that will be made available to BALEAP members and provides details on the impact that COVID-19 had on both individuals and organisations within the EAP sector over the initial six months of the pandemic. It is anticipated that this will be of value to the membership by providing a picture of academic delivery and operations across the sector informing future decision making, planning and strategy.

## Research questions

1. What changes were made to the delivery of EAP provision to enable the programmes to proceed?
2. How did key operations such as administration, admissions and progression change or adjust during this period?

## Methodology

It is anticipated that the research would be mainly quantitative with some element of qualitative data to highlight examples/vignettes.

## Summary of timeline

- 26 October: Closing date for applications for research freelancer
- 30 October: Decision on appointment of research freelancer
- 2 November: Research / data collection to begin
- 15 December: End of data collection
- 15 February: Draft report available to executive for feedback
- 15 March: final version sent to membership

## Submitting your proposal

The following items are required:

1. Please provide your CV with a brief covering letter (1 page) to outline:
  - a. Your interest in this project
  - b. Your experience in quantitative data and qualitative data collection/analysis
2. Please outline in no more than 2 pages how you would approach the research project covering the following:
  - a. Research tools
  - b. Data analysis
  - c. Detailed timeline

Please send these to [research@baleap.org](mailto:research@baleap.org) by 4pm Monday 26<sup>th</sup> October.

Informal questions about the project can be directed to Steven Herron (Research and Publications Officer) [research@baleap.org](mailto:research@baleap.org).

Informal questions about the contractual arrangement and payment can be directed to Bella Reichard (Treasurer) [treasurer@baleap.org](mailto:treasurer@baleap.org).