

**Julie Brown**



# Translating Flexible Learning Policy into Practice

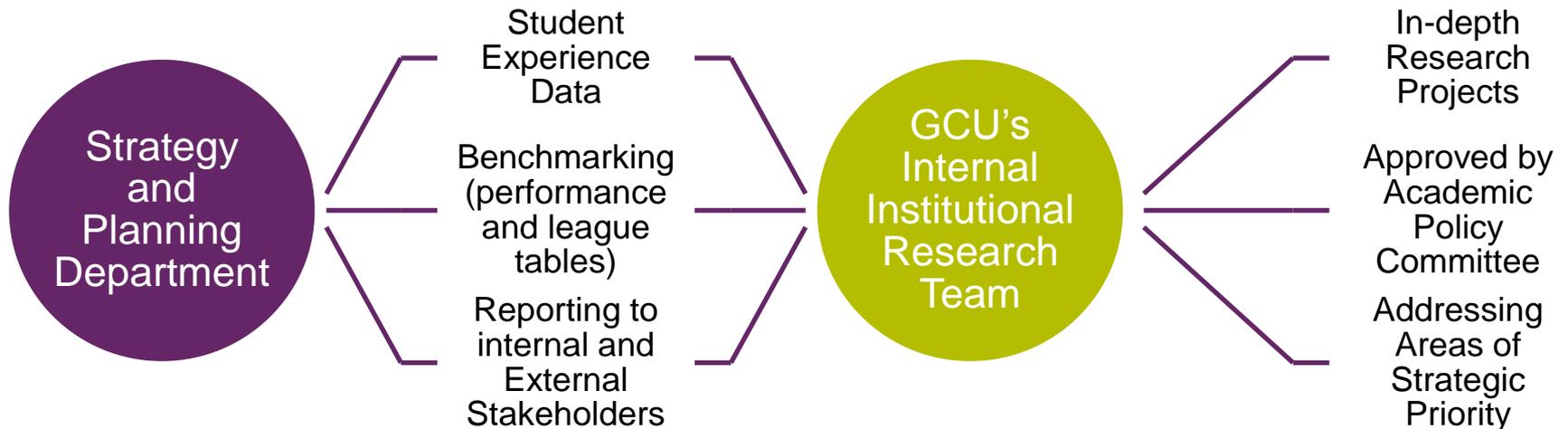
# Translating Flexible Learning Policy into Practice

## Presentation Overview

- Overview of Institutional Research at Glasgow Caledonian University
- Flexible Learning Research Project
  - Purpose, Aims and Methodology
  - Main Findings
  - Recommendations
  - Action Plan

# Overview of Institutional Research

## GCU's Hybrid Model of Institutional Research



# Flexible Learning Pathways Research Project

## Aim and Methodology

### Aim:

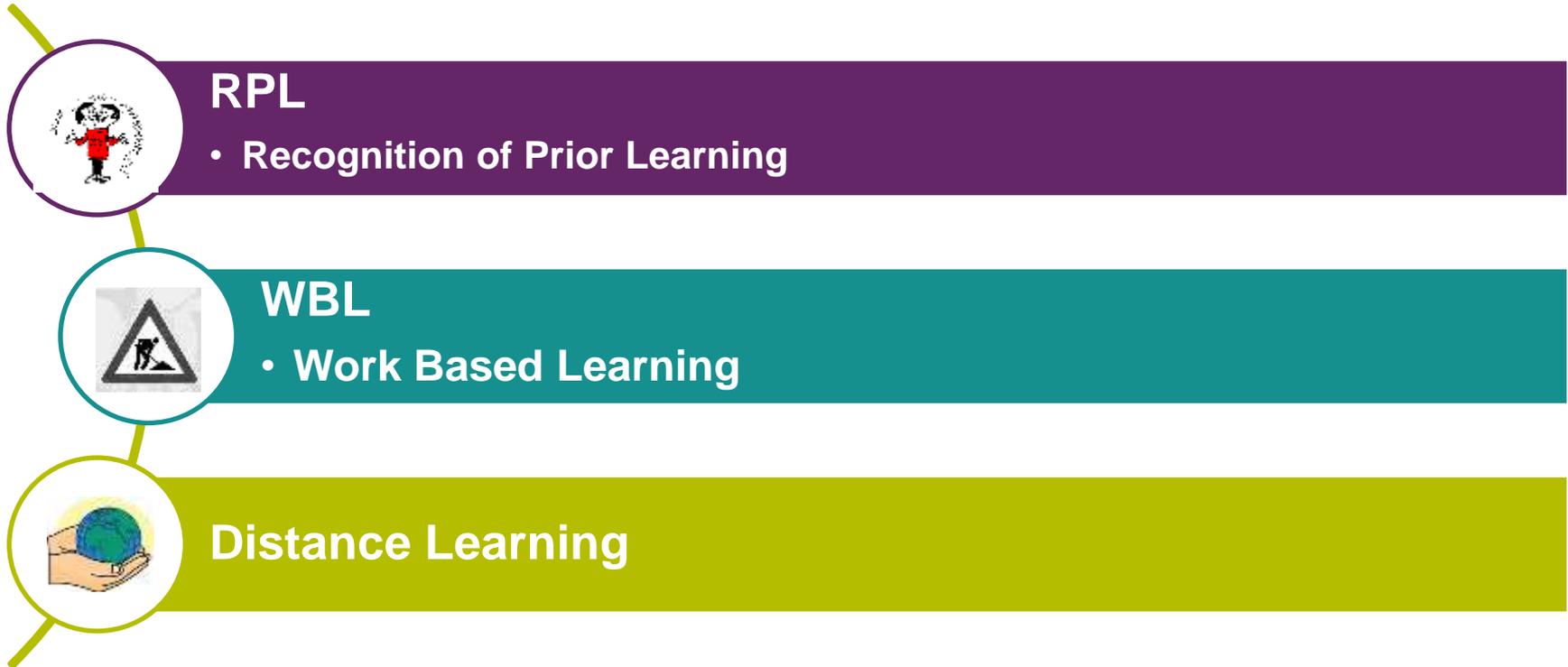
*Explore the extent to which flexible learning policy at GCU was being translated into effective practice*

### Methods:

- Desk Based Research
- Informal Interviews with key members of staff
- Secondary Data Analysis – student data
- Online Questionnaire to all programme leaders and programme administrators

# Flexible Learning Pathways Research Project

Flexible Learning at GCU includes:



# Flexible Learning Pathways Research Project

## Relevant Findings

### Complexity of Defining Flexible Learning

#### **Inconsistent:**

- **RPL:**
  - GCU wide definition – but still confused with Articulation
- **WBL:**
  - No clear GCU wide definition (often confused with placements)
- **Distance Learning:**
  - lack of clear and identifiable GCU wide definition

# Flexible Learning Pathways Research Project

## Relevant Findings

### Flexible Learning *Policy* at GCU

**No one specific policy on Flexible Learning**

**Policy and Guidance for RPL only**

- But only 62% of question respondents that they were aware of the policy and 50% of the guidance

**Scattered use of Flexible Learning within GCU policy and strategy documents**

**Flexible Learning Continuum in development**

# Flexible Learning Pathways Research Project

## Relevant Findings

### Flexible Learning in *Practice*

Where there is policy it is not always being put into practice - RPL Example

1. Clearly identifiable contacts for RPL within each Academic School

2. Staff involved in assessing and supporting RPL claims have the right to training, resources and support

Only 36% of Question respondents aware of this

Confusion of whom the RPL contacts are

ONLY 7% of question respondents noted they were adequately resourced to undertake RPL

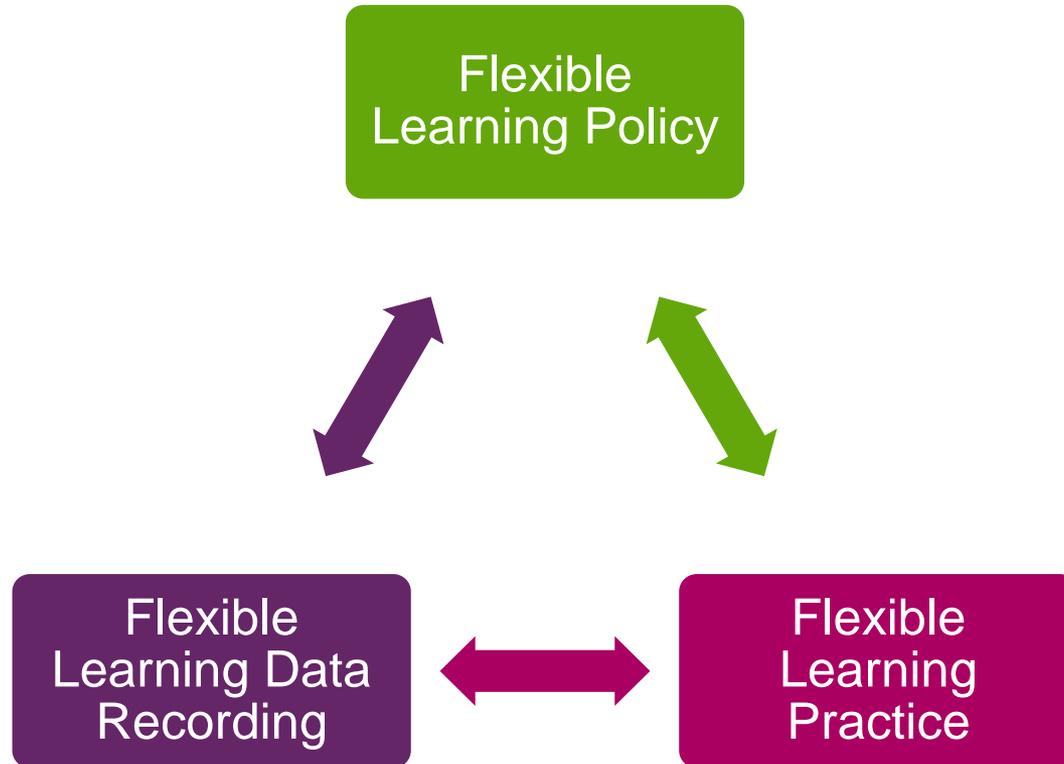
28% of question respondents said that RPL was included in their workloads

1/3 felt they were adequately trained to undertake RPL

67% of question respondents suggested RPL could be enhanced within their school/department

# Flexible Learning Research Project

## Research Findings



# Flexible Learning Research Project

Recommendation	Action
<b>1. Develop Flexible Learning Policy and Guidelines</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop a brief GCU wide Flexible Learning Policy and set of good practice (operational) guidelines which will support the implementation of the SfL.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Incorporating clear and identifiable definitions of areas of flexible learning based on those promoted by the QAA Scotland. The policy and guidelines should be transparent and clearly communicated and evaluated.</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>2. Enhance/embed current RPL Practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Embed and communicate effectively the current principles of RPL<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure clearly identifiable named contacts for RPL</li><li>• Support staff in undertaking RPL training</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>3. Enhance Flexible Learning Data Recording</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure accurate data capture for all students in RPL, WBL and distance learning</li><li>• Record RPL for Entry</li><li>• Explore the development of separate fields for recording RPL and Articulation</li></ul>
<b>4. Enhanced evidence base for Flexible Learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop a case study for RPL</li><li>• Develop and undertake a comparative study for distance learning students</li></ul>

# Flexible Learning Research Project

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<b>* Enhanced evidence base for Flexible Learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop a case study for RPL</li><li>• Develop and undertake a comparative study for distance learning students</li></ul>



# What happened Next?

- Development of Flexible Learning 'Guidance' Underway
- Further research postponed



Questions?

# Thank you.

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