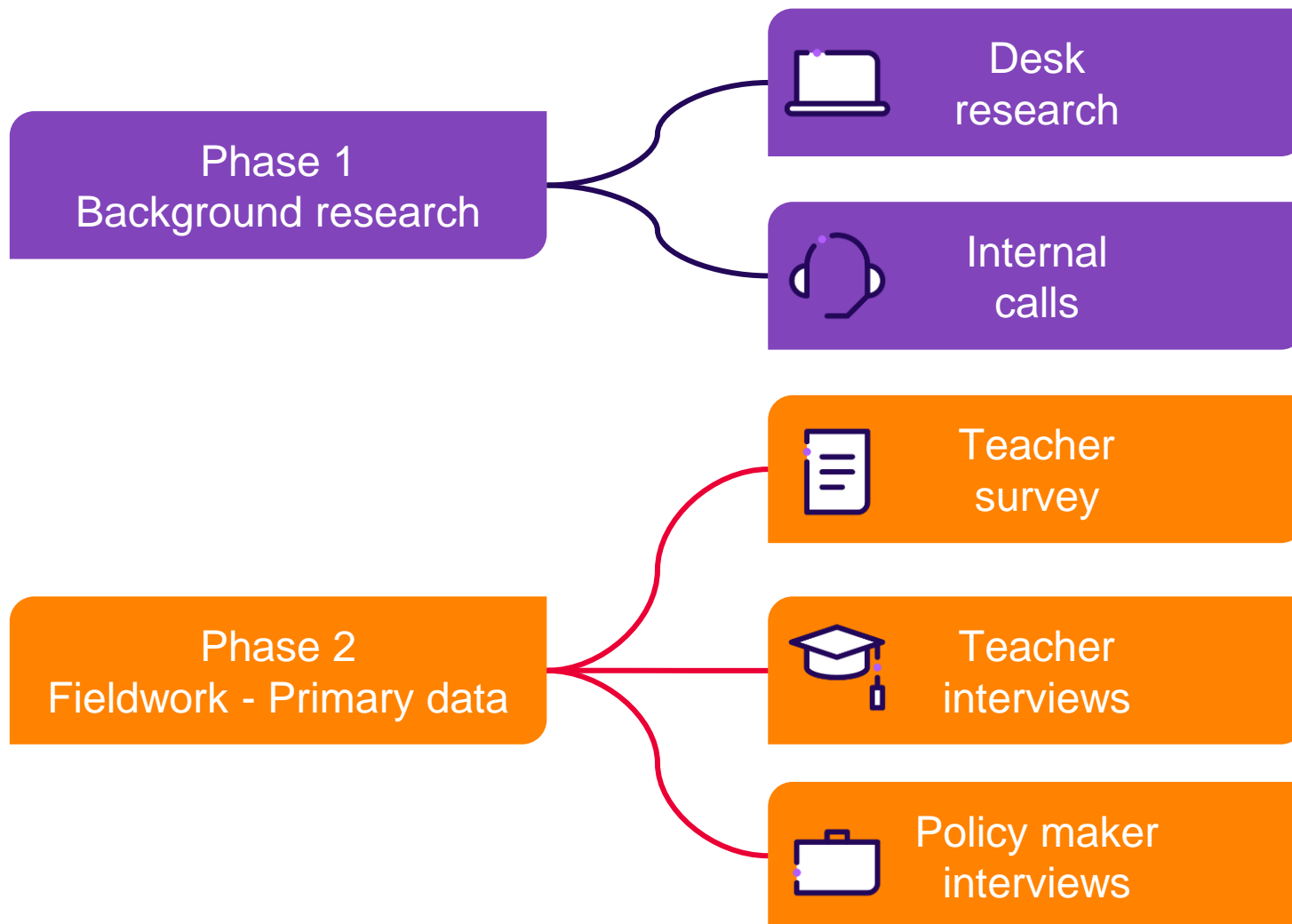# Introduction

Research Objectives

- Understand the experience of digital continuing professional development (CPD) among school teachers and school leaders.

- Understand the appetite for digital CPD opportunities among these groups.

- Explore their needs in relation to digital CPD opportunities.

- Explore what else could be of interest to them in the CPD space.

Methodology

**Phase 1
Background research**

Desk research

Internal calls

**Phase 2
Fieldwork - Primary data**

Teacher survey

Teacher interviews

Policy maker interviews

Sample

Survey

6630 teachers completed the survey

Interviews

47 teachers

11 Policy makers

Across 6 regions

Overview of teacher CPD

Insights from desk research, policy makers and British Council teams

A number of factors impact on the importance of CPD

CPD is valued by teachers and seen as an important part of developing and maintaining the teacher workforce. A number of factors play into this perceived importance:

Teacher Shortages	Reforms and Policy	Impact of the Pandemic
With 74 countries worldwide facing a teacher shortage, and policy makers highlighting an aging teacher population, there is an ever growing need for up to date and engaging teacher CPD.	OECD findings from 2018 cite that many countries now mandate participation in CPD for employment purposes or promotion opportunities. Policy makers and British Council stakeholders echo the growing importance that government places worldwide on CPD.	The learning gap will only be heightened by a lack of teacher training. In LMICs, 'learning poverty' – the number of 10 year-olds who can't read and understand a simple story by the end of primary – was at 53%, while for the poorest countries it was 80% on average.

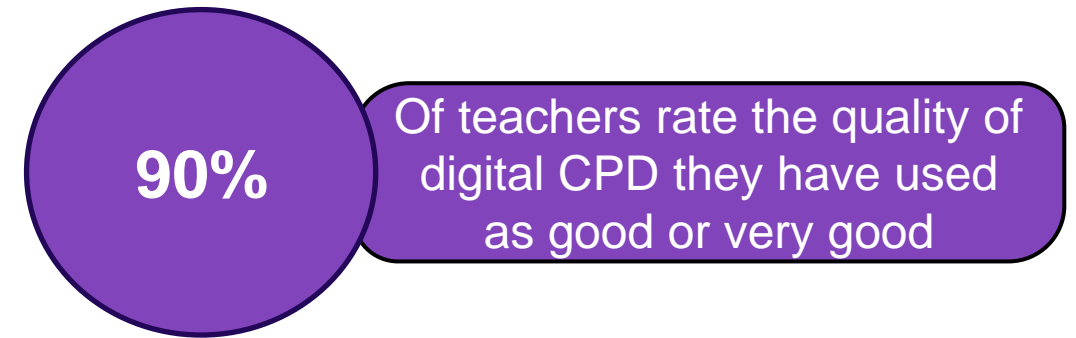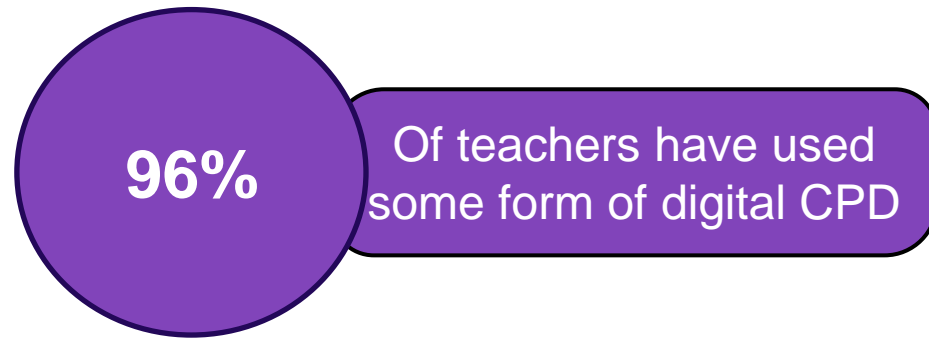# Digital CPD has increased in recent years, dating pre-pandemic

- Research highlights that uptake of CPD had been growing prior to the pandemic.

- Policy makers and internal British Council stakeholders note the pandemic has accelerated uptake of digital CPD for teachers.

- As a result, digital CPD is now a very crowded market

- Policy makers reflect that this influx of digital CPD programmes can mean that not all of them are effective.

- Overall, however, well-designed and supported digital CPD can be as effective as face-to-face learning if not more effective.

[OECD, 2018]

Overall views on digital CPD Teachers

Insights from teacher survey and interviews

The majority of teachers have experienced good quality digital CPD

96% Of teachers have used some form of digital CPD

90% Of teachers rate the quality of digital CPD they have used as good or very good
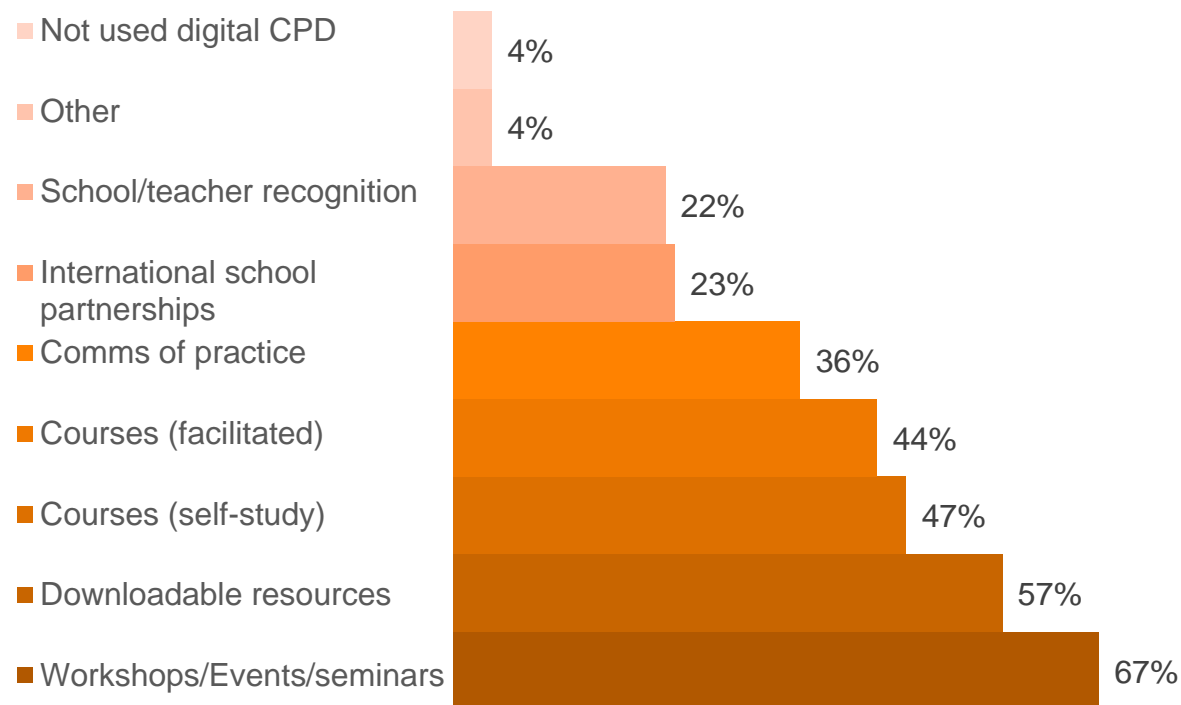
"Sometimes we have webinars set up by the British Council where they invite people to come speak. People from different parts of the world. So, anytime we're put in to listen to that we get enriched by what is said."
Head teacher, Nigeria

Events, workshops and seminars are the most used digital CPD

Digital CPD used

- Not used digital CPD — 4%
- Other — 4%
- School/teacher recognition — 22%
- International school partnerships — 23%
- Comms of practice — 36%
- Courses (facilitated) — 44%
- Courses (self-study) — 47%
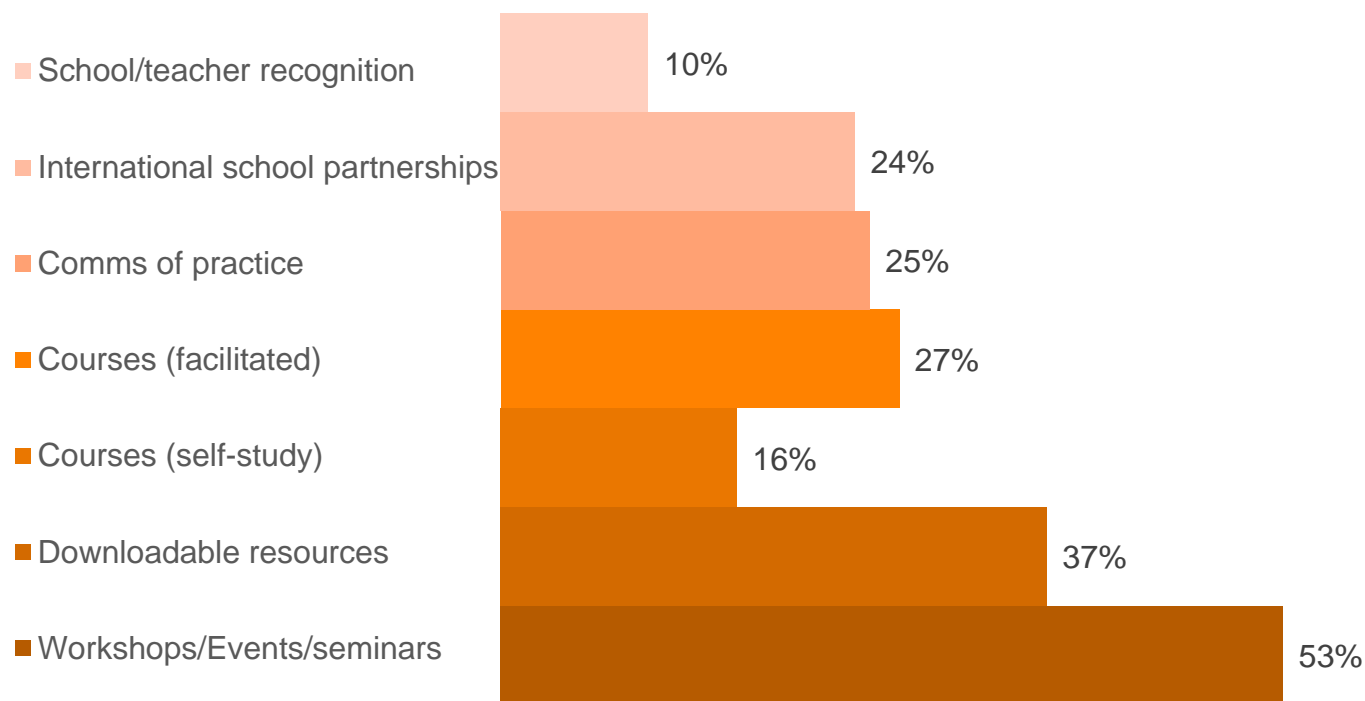- Downloadable resources — 57%
- Workshops/Events/seminars — 67%

"Accessing resources either to use as development or use in your classroom, my classroom. Every time I'm going to try to know the latest techniques in teaching or new strategies through courses, pre-courses, diplomas, to apply it in my classroom"
Head of maths, Egypt

C3. Which of the following types of digital CPD have you used?(N=6630)

Differences between preferences and usage

Teacher digital CPD preferences ranked by usage

School/teacher recognition	10%
International school partnerships	24%
Comms of practice	25%
Courses (facilitated)	27%
Courses (self-study)	16%
Downloadable resources	37%
Workshops/Events/seminars	53%

Teachers in MENA are much less likely to prefer downloadable resources (27%).

This could be due to lack of good quality resources in Arabic.

Europe has significantly higher preference for events or seminars than all other regions (71%).

Americas show the most preference for facilitated courses (35%).

International school partnerships are notably more preferred by teachers in South Asia (32%) and the UK (33%).

What does this mean?

- In a competitive landscape teachers are used to high quality CPD.

- A mixture of events/seminars and downloadable resources would appeal to the most teachers, this appeals to the dual needs of interesting and engaging CPD and quick and flexible learning they can fit around their own schedule. Considerations should be made for different regional preferences.

- When offering courses, these should aim to be at least part facilitated, as many teachers do not enjoy fully self-study courses, for instance, interactive touch points throughout longer courses.

- The benefits of downloadable resources can be lost if they are not in the local language (e.g. Arabic for MENA) or have to be significantly adapted.

Digital CPD - Technology barriers

Reliable internet access is rarer than smart device access

65% Of teachers *always* have access to a smart device
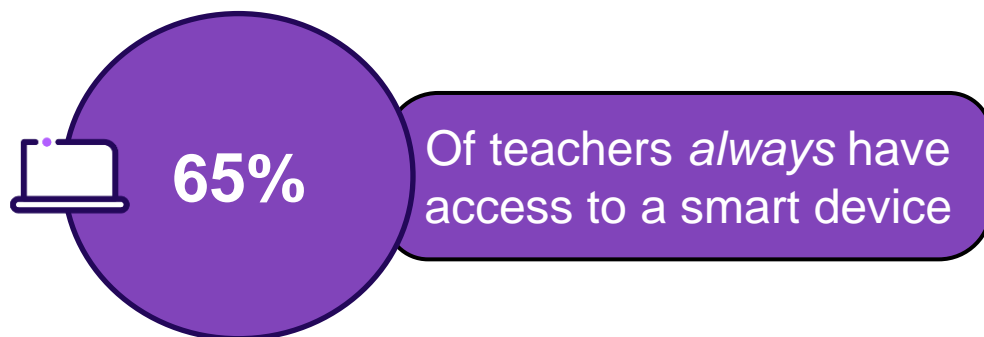
Two thirds of teachers always have access to a smart device

A further 24% usually have access.

Leaving 11% who sometimes or rarely have access.

48% Of teachers *always* have reliable internet
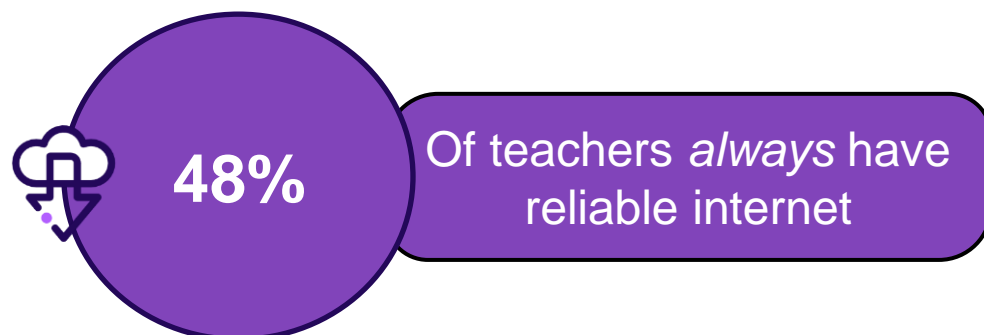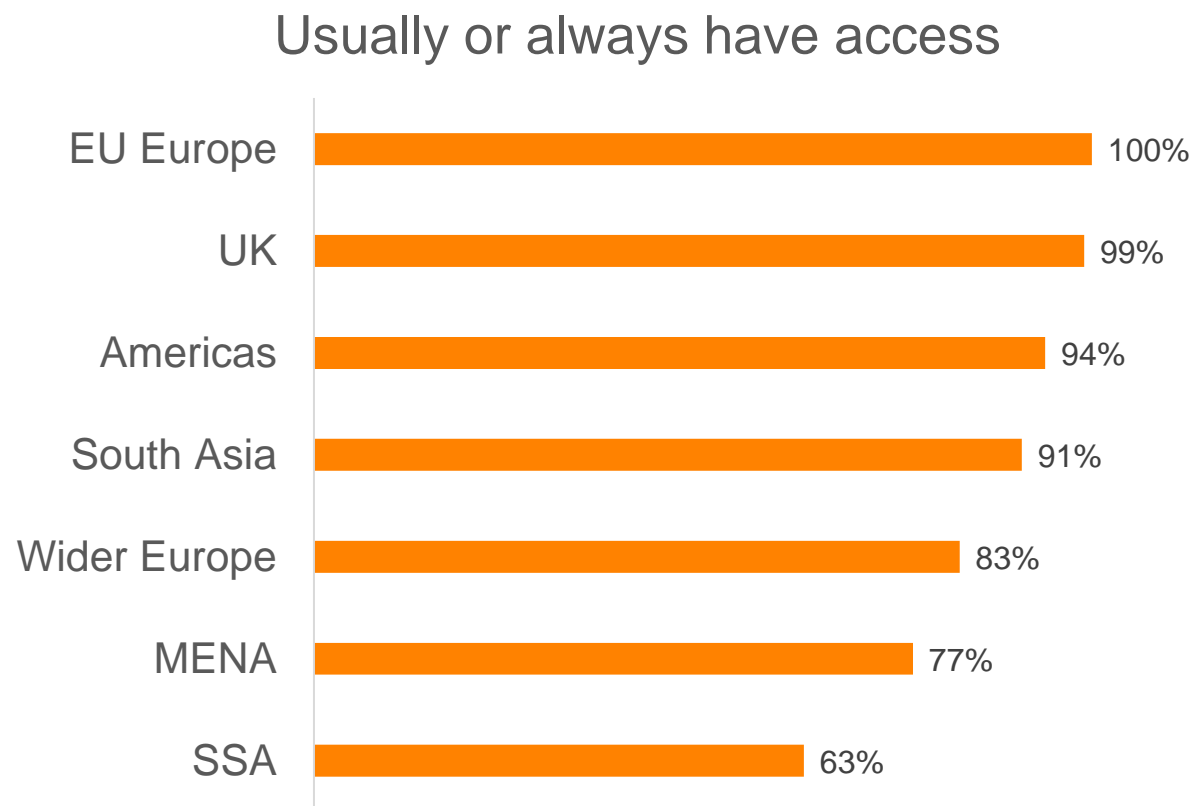
Only 48% of teachers always have reliable internet access

Additionally, 39% usually have access.

Leaving 11% who sometimes have access and 3% who rarely or never have reliable internet.

Sub-Saharan Africa has the biggest connection issue

Usually or always have access

Region	%
EU Europe	100%
UK	99%
Americas	94%
South Asia	91%
Wider Europe	83%
MENA	77%
SSA	63%

While globally teachers working in rural areas were slightly less likely to have reliable internet access that those in urban areas, this is much more dependent on region.

In the EU, being rural or urban makes no difference to internet accessibility.

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C2. How often do you have access to a reliable* internet connection? Scale: Always / Usually / Sometimes / Rarely / Never (N=6630)

——

The advantages of digital CPD are mostly practical considerations

All regions globally identified the following practical advantages of digital CPD:

- Time - saving and flexible
- Cost saving
- Many teachers can access digital from home

Additional advantages identified by one of more regions include:

- Widening participation of CPD
- The benefit of digital CPD for enabling international links
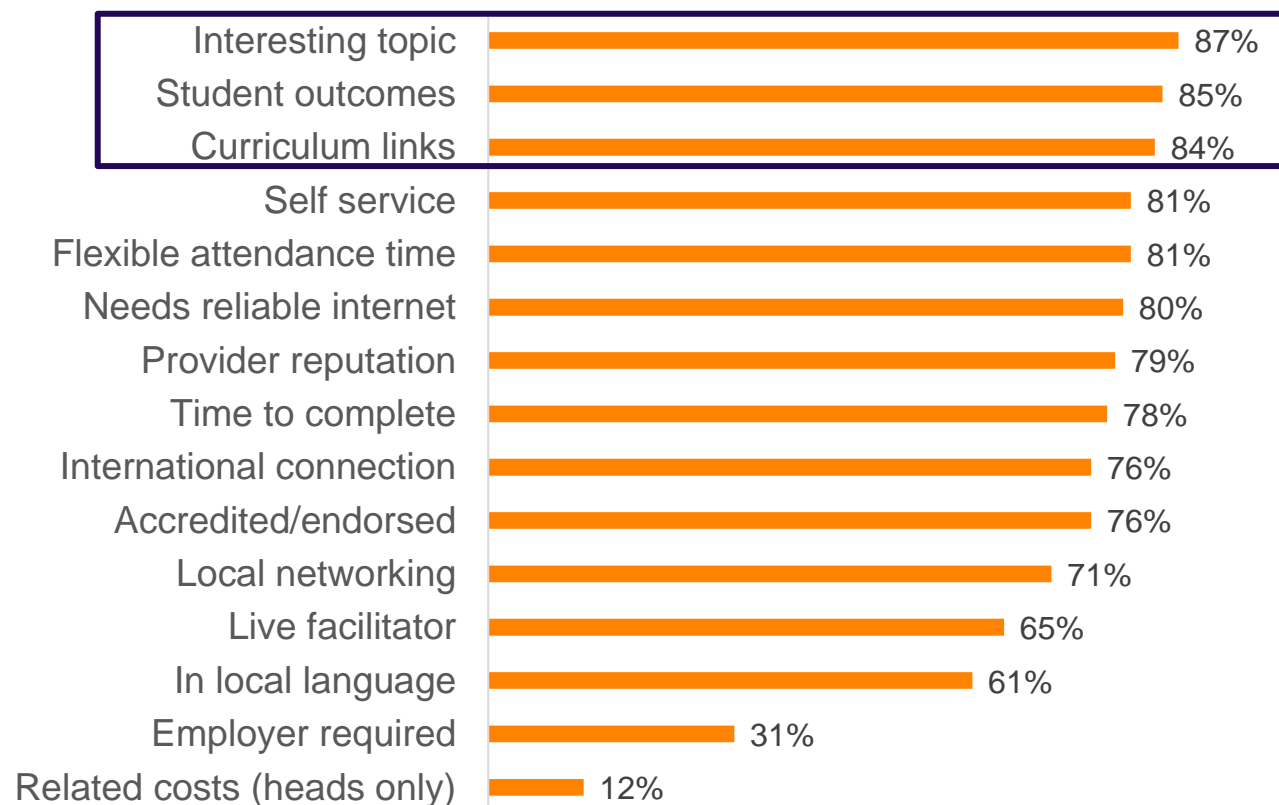- Flexibility of self-study syllabus

Teachers in the UK and EU also mentioned technology advantages:

- Recordings

- Use of interactive tools

Digital CPD - Needs and barriers

CPD must be interesting, focused on student outcomes, and relevant to the local curriculum

Factors that are important when choosing free CPD

Factor	%
Interesting topic	87%
Student outcomes	85%
Curriculum links	84%
Self service	81%
Flexible attendance time	81%
Needs reliable internet	80%
Provider reputation	79%
Time to complete	78%
International connection	76%
Accredited/endorsed	76%
Local networking	71%
Live facilitator	65%
In local language	61%
Employer required	31%
Related costs (heads only)	12%

While the pattern is roughly similar across regions there are some notable exceptions:

- Self service in MENA is much less important (71%).

- EU and UK are much less interested in accreditation, live facilitators, and local networking than other regions.

- While still the least popular, employer requirement is important for half of teachers in Americas and MENA.

C6. Please rate the following on their importance to you when choosing which free CPD resources to use?, 1~5 scale Not important at all to Very important. % select 4 or 5 on the scale (N=6630)

What teachers say about their needs

Globally, a number of unprompted CPD needs came up in the interviews that are common to all regions.

| Mental health and wellbeing training | Digital skills | Networking opportunities |

The importance of interesting and relevant topics is vital

In our survey and interviews, we asked teachers if there were any other important factors

"Needs to be motivational and a topic that I am interested in, that benefits the students and can be embedded into the school curriculum. The time of the CPD is important, as during school hours is very difficult."
Primary teacher, UK

"Provisions of smart phones to the learners will enhance good learning outcomes"
Headteacher, Nigeria

"The topics to be covered should be relevant to the learners and the community."
Senior leadership team, Zambia

"Supply of Digital tools and access to network connection"
Headteacher, Nigeria

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c6ii Are there any other important factors you consider when choosing which CPD to take part in or use?(N=2727)

The main barriers to CPD are similar to the top needs

The three most common barriers affect at least one third of teachers

45% Lack of interest

41% Irrelevant to curriculum

33% Lack of clear student outcomes
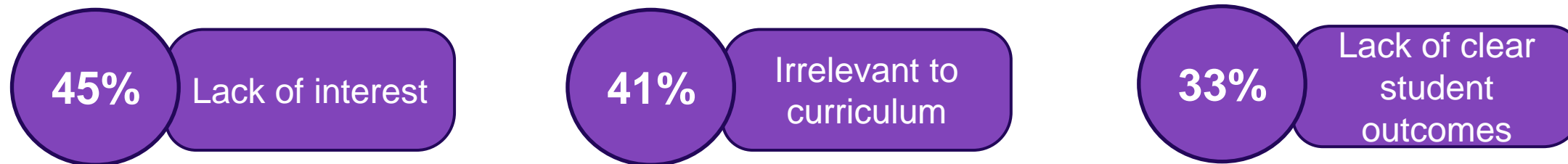
Regionally - there are some stark differences in barriers.

- In Wider Europe, English only language is the most common barrier, with 4 in 10 teachers listing it.

- A lack of accreditation/recognition would put off over a third of MENA and SSA teachers, as would having no networking opportunities.

- Only 11% of SSA teachers see Online only as a barrier, this is actually higher in MENA and South Asia (14% and 15% respectively).

C7. Which of the following would likely stop you from taking part in a specific piece of free CPD? (N=6630)

There are no practical barriers to access in the UK and EU

For teachers in the UK and EU, and urban areas of Brazil, there are other factors that turn teachers away from digital CPD

Digital fatigue	**Shorter online attention span**	**Disengagement of other participants**
Firewalls in schools	**Lack of interactivity**	**Often passive form of learning**
Pace of delivery	**Time constraints**	**Outside working hours**

What does this mean?

Barriers to digital CPD

| Where poor internet - Consider using digital only for small/short, downloadable CPD | Concerns around digital fatigue | Adapting for local language is important |

Priorities when choosing digital CPD

| Clearly linked to student outcomes | Relevant to local needs and curriculum | Interesting topics in an accessible format |

While there is space for different forms of CPD it's important to use digital for the correct format. Courses and longer format CPD should have expert facilitation and consider using a hybrid of face-to-face and online learning.
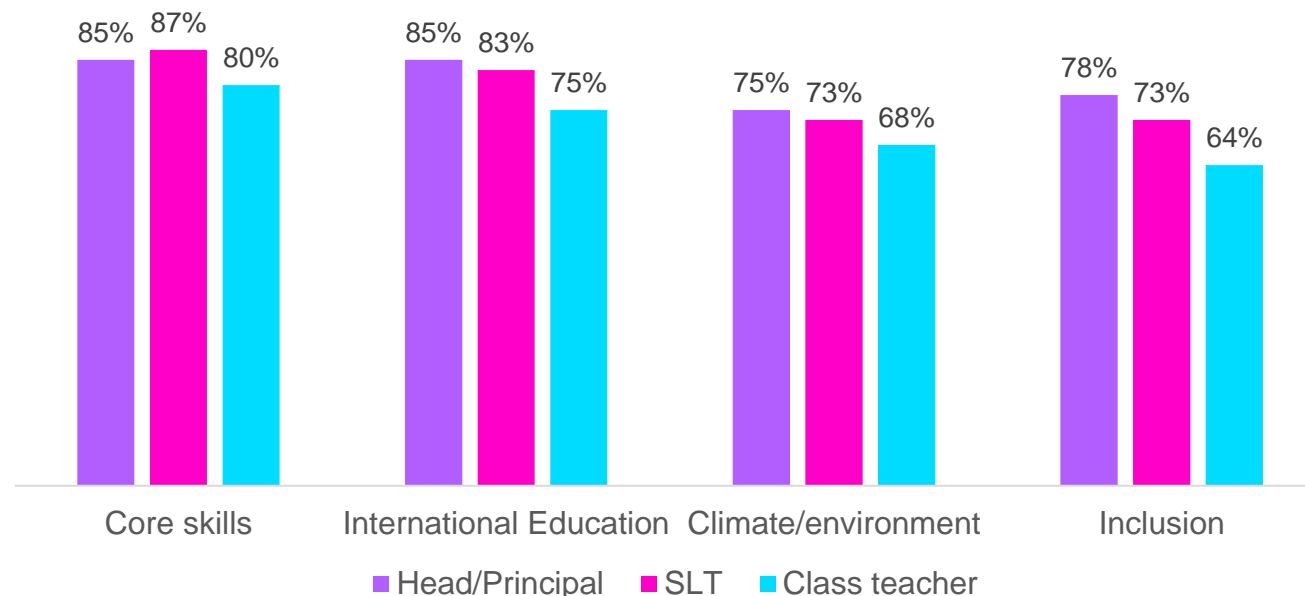
British Council's CPD themes

British Council CPD topics are of interest to most teachers

Core skills is the most popular topic, 81% saying they are interested or very interested in it, but even the 'less popular' of the four topics - inclusion - is of interest to more than two thirds of teachers.

81%	78%	69%	68%
Core skills	International	Climate	Inclusion
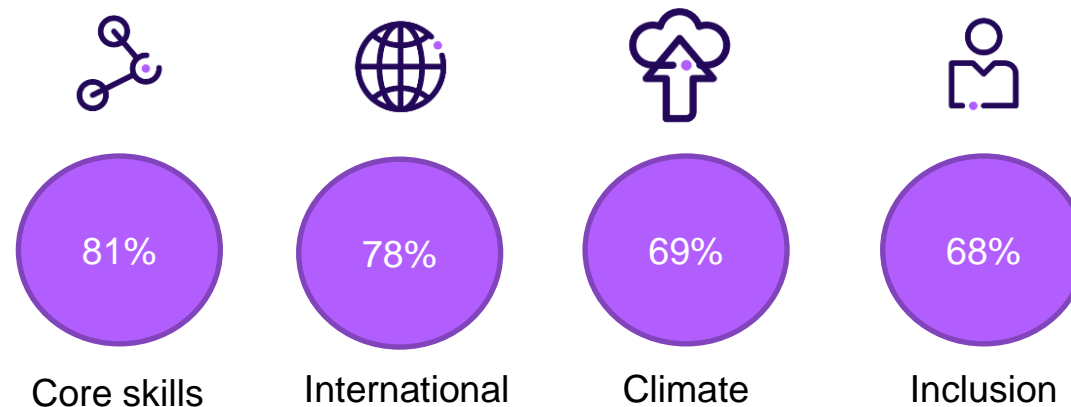
Class teachers tend to be slightly less interested in all of the topics than heads or SLT.

Head teachers are significantly more interested in inclusion than both SLT and class teachers.

	Core skills	International Education	Climate/environment	Inclusion
Head/Principal	85%	85%	75%	78%
SLT	87%	83%	73%	73%
Class teacher	80%	75%	68%	64%

■ Head/Principal ■ SLT ■ Class teacher

C9. How would you rate your level of interest in digital CPD on the following topics? Scale 1~5, Not very interested to Very interested, % displayed if selected 4 or 5. (N=6630)

Summary

Summary - What CPD works

CPD should come from a trusted and credible brand

Fulfill specific needs for the market, via a broad range of offers

Self study courses should be available but the best will find ways to increase interactivity

Link to specific curricula in each market, to ensure its relevant and quick and easy to access

CPD should focus on student outcomes

Teachers like to see resources signposted more clearly by age range and by topic,

Practical considerations should be taken into account

Thank you