

Recognising Teacher Excellence at the University of Glasgow

Project Report October 2014

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

In order to revise the criteria for teaching excellence within University of Glasgow career pathways, an institutional team was formed to start a robust process of review and recommendation for change as necessary. In November 2012, this team (led by Professor Vicky Gunn from the Learning and Teaching Centre) was awarded a place on the Higher Education Academy's (HEA) Change Programme to undertake a project examining approaches to recognising and rewarding teaching excellence at Level 10 (Professorial level). This project award was followed some months later by an award of circa £20K from the University's LTDF to the same project team to expand the HEA work to include exploration of teaching excellence across levels and job families.

Questions focused on the following broad areas:

- *What is teaching excellence*, where do we see it, to what extent can and do we evidence it, and how is it valued?
- What are the *mechanisms and structures* that support the development and evaluation of teaching excellence?
- What is the nature of *scholarship* within the T&S track and R&T track and how is it understood, practiced and rewarded?
- How is excellence *formally recognised* in P&DR and promotion and how could this be better achieved?

The following material is drawn from the interviews within the four Colleges as well as conversations about the T&S track within the institution, and new academic pathways and teaching excellence strategies being developed in other Russell Group institutions/Universitas 21 institutions. Each College identified one School from which themes and conclusions about teaching excellence could be drawn. In all, 41 academic staff were interviewed. To ensure that voices from a range of academic tracks (R&T, T&S, R) were incorporated, each College's interviews included research oriented and teaching oriented staff at a range of levels. This group consisted of: 5 professors (level 10), 11 at SL/SUT (level 9), 31 at L/UT, 1 Research Fellow, and 3 Associate Tutors.

Additionally, overseen by the PI for this project, a student-led aspect to the work was included. This work synthesised data collected by the Student Representative Council (SRC) as part of nominations for the University of Glasgow's Student-Led Teaching Awards (SLTAs) over a three year period (academic sessions 2011/12; 2012/13 and 2013/13) and data collected through a series of focus groups facilitated by a small student-led institutional research group (two RAs and 4 undergraduates).

Headlines

Some of the key points to emerge from the project were:

1. There is clearly considerable desire among staff, despite both perceived workload pressures and difficulties with career progression, to continually improve the quality of teaching and the student experience.
2. Scholarship and teaching excellence are difficult to define, evidence, and demonstrate in formal processes relating to performance review and progression.
3. Scholarship in particular is seen to have little intellectual standing despite its importance within teaching and learning and is believed by some respondents to be increasingly

- squeezed out of individuals' workloads.
4. Teaching is given variable attention in P&DR. In the R&T track relatively little attention seems to be paid to it by reviewers and this perception is exacerbated by the visual weightings of each part of the form. In T&S, teaching is the focus of the discussion, scholarship much less so. Where it is considered, quantity of teaching rather than quality of teaching tends to form the basis of discussions and it is particularly difficult to draw out what performance might look like in terms of qualitative differences between levels from grade 7 through to grade 10.
 5. There are issues around the measurement of teaching quality that are not dealt with in P&DR in sufficient detail, particularly the use of metrics and student evaluations but also peer feedback on teaching.
 6. Research outputs and grant income are believed to be privileged above all other forms of performance and, within the T&S pathway, it is universally agreed that promotion criteria in these categories are extremely difficult to achieve given the emphasis on teaching commitments (particularly in the current funding climate for SoTL) and the recent developments in the workload model that apportion only 10% of staff time to scholarship.
 7. There is a sense that there are not enough opportunities for all staff to meet established performance criteria and that those opportunities that are available are not always aligned with the aspirations and/or potential of a wide range of staff.
 8. Particular challenges are believed to arise for staff on the T&S track who seek progression beyond UT, whereas moving across from a lower grade on the R&T to the next grade on the T&S track is perceived to be somewhat easier.
 9. Across the student collected data, the theme of individual care and interest from teaching and support staff is uppermost in students' concerns. The extent to which personalisation of the learning experience is synonymous with staff offering additional (and often out of hours) support time to students has clear resource implications, as well as implications for staff health and productivity. It seems clear that students perceive teaching staff, (and the auxiliary staff they encounter in teaching environments) as both mentors and as sources of pastoral, and emotional care.

Recommendations

The key point emerging from this project is the need for central guidance around teaching excellence and promotions to be explicitly reviewed and criteria established which are robust, achievable and acceptable across the Colleges. When this group started out, it hoped to achieve this. However, it is clear from the depth and range of issues emerging in the interviews that the institution requires a centrally established working group, which formally includes HR and College representation, to take forward what is, in effect, a structural issue. This group, therefore, recommends that the VP Learning & Teaching establishes a short-life Working Group to revisit promotions criteria relating to teaching in both the T&S and the R&T tracks with a remit to undertake the following:

- Review and renew explicit criteria for promotions/ R&R pathways, ensuring that College-relevant, achievable criteria for excellence in teaching within a research-intensive environment are articulated and supported;
- Consider not only the criteria within promotion but also the columns, headings and 'weightings'. There is a perception that differences between the T&S and R&T tracks are significant in practice but this is not obvious from the presentation of the promotion applications and criteria.

- Draw together the best criteria from existing initiatives – including Teaching Excellence Awards, Student-led Teaching Awards, the elements of the various levels of the UKPSF as well as approaches taken to establish robust teaching criteria at the University of Cardiff & our U21 partners, University of British Columbia, Lund University - to develop a more effective structure for career development in which excellence in teaching (including the scholarship of learning and teaching) is demonstrably valued.
- In collaboration with Human Resources, develop College-level guidance for the support of reward and recognition of teaching throughout the academic career and in particular, to provide guidance for promotions committees and external referees considering these applications.
- Find ways of ensuring that funding opportunities to attend conferences/ CPD are established as a basis for T&S staff to meet their professional requirements in a manner commensurate with the R&T track approach to conference funding.
- Identify changes to address misperceptions concerning how the institution values teaching;
- Identify ways of recognising the collaborative endeavour of teaching across campus, providing support for this through reward systems. This is considered to be a particular issue for the current design of P&DR forms but potentially also promotion applications.
- Continue to support student-led teaching awards, recognising that they are a distinct form of reward and recognition but valuable as part of a portfolio including other forms of evidence of teaching excellence.

RECOGNISING TEACHER EXCELLENCE PROJECT REPORT

October 2014

1. Introduction to the Project

For a research-intensive institution, the University of Glasgow has been relatively advanced in introducing initiatives which reward and recognise (R&R) teaching. There is, nonetheless, a lack of systematic approaches to R&R of *excellence* in teaching. As the phases of *Maximising the Academic Career* were rolled out across the University, it was considered timely to critically review and improve R&R approaches to teaching already in place. This LTDF project was part of a variety of responses to teaching excellence at University of Glasgow aimed at consolidating appropriate and achievable criteria into a framework in which teaching excellence can be evidenced.

Scholarly base of this project

This LTDF project drew on the funded Higher Education Academy research awarded to Professor Gunn: *Literature review on teaching excellence in Higher Education* in 2013. This was a desk-based critical analysis of the research and grey literature since the publication of 2007 CHERI literature review '*Excellence in teaching and learning: a review of the literature for the Higher Education Academy*'.¹ It established a set of qualitative indicators of teacher excellence and indicated:

1. There is a lack of sophisticated conceptualization / definition of teaching excellence in higher education literature to date (since 2007). The most obvious results of this are:
 - Institutions use research excellence paradigms as a framework to establish reward and recognition systems for teaching
 - Methods for rewarding and recognizing teaching excellence emerge locally (discipline, school, College) which don't necessarily articulate with criteria for promotion as established centrally and interpreted through College discipline-focused promotions' committees.
2. The absence of sophisticated theorizing is particularly acute in terms of leadership in teaching excellence.
3. There is some question over the efficacy of teaching awards for raising the status of teaching in universities as well as criticism of the lack of robust criteria relating to teaching awards.
4. There has been a shift in emphasis in how teaching excellence has been identified, with the emphasis in the last five years being in terms of:
 - Active research-teaching activities;
 - Student engagement including facilitation of peer-peer work;
 - Assessment regime change;
 - Flexibility of provision and access to provision;
 - Engagement with the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning and that SoTL which has students as co-investigators is particularly 'excellent'.

¹ Gunn, V.A. & Fisk, A. (2013) *Considering Teaching Excellence in Higher Education: 2007-2013*
http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/documents/research/TELR_final_acknowledgements.pdf

Aims

To negotiate a more systematic and integrated approach to teaching excellence which focuses on:

1. Generating explicit criteria for promotions/ R&R pathways, ensuring College relevant criteria for excellence in teaching within a research-intensive environment. The aim would be to establish criteria that allow for the differentiation of quality teaching (as expected by all academics) and teaching excellence.
2. Drawing together the best of existing initiatives into a coherent structure for career development in which excellence in teaching (including scholarship) is valued.
3. Developing criteria for excellence which articulate with the University's interpretation of the UK Professional Standards (in teaching) Framework descriptors (1-4) as they will become articulated through the University of Glasgow's CPD (teaching) framework.
4. Informing the work of Human Resources in the support of reward and recognition of teaching throughout the academic career.

Methods

Each College identified a School that would act as a case study from which themes and conclusions around teaching excellence could be drawn. In all 41 academic staff were interviewed. To ensure that voices from a range of academic tracks (R&T, T&S, R) were incorporated, each College's interviews represented research oriented and teaching oriented staff at a range of levels. This group consisted of: 5 professors (level 10), 11 at SL/SUT (level 9), 31 at L/UT, 1 Research Fellow, and 3 Associate Tutors.

Additionally, overseen by the PI for this project, a student-led aspect to the work was included. This work synthesised data collected by the Student Representative Council (SRC) as part of nominations for the University of Glasgow's Student-Led Teaching Awards (SLTAs) over a three year period (academic sessions 2011/12; 2012/13 and 2013/13) and data collected through a series of focus groups facilitated by a small student-led institutional research group (two RAs and 4 undergraduates).

Certain activities were identified as core to this change programme:

1. Clarifying perceptions and practices relating to teaching criteria;
2. Student engagement;
3. Revisiting formal teaching excellence criteria and opportunities necessary to meet them;
4. Linking outcomes to the University's UKPSF CPD Framework;
5. Ensuring sustainability;
6. Evaluation.

For the LTDF project two core activities formed the basis of generating data concerning how staff and students perceived teaching criteria relevant to their roles or engagement:

Activity 1:

Clarifying perceptions and practices relating to teaching criteria for reward and recognition across campus

1. Interviews were undertaken with key staff within each of the case study schools.
2. Academic staff were interviewed for their views on the appropriateness of current teaching criteria, their perceptions of interpretation of the criteria, and possible ways forward.

3. The data-set was coded by the two project Research Assistants, with each college lead overseeing the analysis.

Activity 2:

Student engagement

Additionally to this, the team employed four student interns to work on exploring ways in which student views on teaching excellence are or could be integrated within academic systems to reward and recognise teaching excellence. The focus of the interns' work was:

1. A three way comparison between a) the key criteria of student excellence as identified in the Student-led teaching awards with b) the formalized criteria for teaching excellence within the institution's Teaching Excellence Awards and c) the outcomes of criteria for teaching excellence generated through the Teaching Excellence literature review;
2. Fully structured interviews with students focused on their concepts of 'excellent', 'quality', and 'satisfactory' teaching, and how these can be converted into meaningful, robust student-driven criteria not dependent solely on popularity;
3. Interactive workshops with students in which they defined excellent teaching and feedback, identifying effective teaching methods and learning interventions, and set out how they think teaching could be delivered. These sessions were used to provide insight into how students articulate their desired and actual learning experiences as well as what they consider to be satisfactory in terms of feedback, opportunities for personal development and intellectually stimulating teaching.

Outcomes

Within the original bid we outlined six activities that were required as part of a change process with regards to the development of appropriate career oriented criteria around teaching excellence. As activities 1 & 2 were undertaken, it became clear that the project concept was far bigger than could be achieved within the team / resources available.

Indeed, what emerged as the data set was collected and analysed was the realization that a substantial, university-wide working group with Human Resources' representation would be necessary to take the bigger programme forward. Perception of, engagement with, and practice around teaching criteria were shown to be variable within, and across, Colleges. As such activities outlined in numbers 3-6 aligned more with issues that were reiterated as necessary by the data-set gathered but required significant institutional engagement to operationalize. What the initial activities in the project identified was that the activities outlined in 3-6 are critical, but require an institutional-wide working group with HR representation to take them forward. . As such they align directly with the ultimate recommendations of this report. The full list of activities initially outlined within the LTDF bid can be found in [Appendix 1](#).

Confidentiality

As a result of the potentially sensitive nature of the interviews, particularly with academic staff, the team was keen to ensure that standard ethical practice was followed within the project. Ethics approval was successfully sought from the College of Social Sciences Ethics Committee. Following advice from the Court office, the 3 other College Ethics committees were provided with ethics committee documentation for information and accepted the CoSS Ethics Committee's decision on their behalf. As a result this report maintains confidentiality of individuals throughout and the method of reporting was designed to minimize identification of any area or person.

2. Perceptions of teaching excellence: Findings from the Colleges

“What makes an excellent teacher? You have to know your subject matter inside out. You also have to know about pedagogy. And you have to know learning theory, and you have to be able to think across a range of approaches, a range of learning theories within whatever the subject area...”

“...good teachers are people who are combining research with teaching and I suppose are also to a certain degree a pastoral sense of who your students are and I’m also thinking about research into your actual teaching methodologies and the pedagogies that you’re using in terms of that whole idea of transformation of what’s going on with your actual learners.”

Introduction

Each College identified a School from which themes and conclusions around teaching excellence could be drawn. In all, across the 4 cases, 41 academic staff were interviewed. To ensure that voices from a range of academic tracks (R&T, T&S, R) were incorporated, each College’s interviews represented research oriented and teaching oriented staff at a range of levels. This group consisted of: 5 professors (level 10), 11 at SL/SUT (level 9), 31 at L/UT, 1 Research Fellow, and 3 Associate Tutors.

Method

The project team (PI, College Leads and two RAs) met regularly to identify appropriate ways of coding the material. The data were analysed according to the themes in the interview questions. Thereafter, a process of inductive coding took place and informed further analysis. These codes were as follows:

1. *Background & Context*: definitions of teaching excellence; reasons for striving for excellence; Current feelings amongst those in the teaching track and the research and teaching track.
2. *Current structures*: Processes of teaching development; collaborative teaching.
3. *Evidencing teaching excellence*: Changing ways of evidencing teaching excellence; peer observation; dissemination; measures of teaching excellence.
4. *Improving rewards and recognition for teaching excellence*: Discussions around teaching excellence; collaborative teaching; student feedback; performance judgement; increased flexibility in role; changes to the University Teacher job; transitions between the grades.

As part of this process, College-centred case studies were produced. For confidentiality / anonymity of the participants, however, key elements within the case studies were drawn together from the specific statements made by staff, summarized and are outlined here.

Key themes

Theme 1 - Perceptions of the current context

Overall, the interviews indicated that the commitment to, and quality of, teaching locally was high. A view common to most respondents was that the university perceives teaching

as valuable, but does not recognise individual staff for their contribution to teaching. Particular emphasis was placed on the need for more support for the delivery of teaching and scholarship (with the latter being perceived as having very variable structural support).

For some staff the role of University Teacher aligns well with their own identities as teachers and communicators. There was, however, a question concerning the relative status of the teacher track. One difficulty in determining the respective value of each track identified by our interviewees is that good, if not excellent, teaching is expected from staff in both tracks. This was summed up by one interviewee thus: *“If both a senior university teacher and a senior lecturer are supposed to be equally good in terms of the quality of their learning and teaching, what is it that differentiates them, is it the proportion of their activity?”* Equally, both tracks are expected to generate research and scholarship but the metrics for research make evaluating it easier at an organizational level. Indeed, scholarship was viewed by our interviewees as frequently being poorly understood in terms of what standard it should demonstrate, what quantity is required, and in what form(s) it might appear.

Staff were aware that the reasons for excellence in teaching not being recognised and rewarded in the way they felt it should be, were complex and wide reaching. Staff reflected on these reasons. Firstly, and perhaps most importantly many of the staff interviewed shared the view that teaching excellence was particularly hard to recognise and reward. They believed that the first step in moving things forward would be to develop an understanding about what teaching excellence was. However, again, staff were conscious that this is not an easy task as;

“there is no one perfect way to do virtually anything in life. So we are in danger of homogenising and eh believing that, yeah we believe that there is only one correct set of procedures, one correct one, one correct style, one correct methodology. That’s dangerous.”

This consideration was also raised in terms of the extent to which students are given the tools to respond constructively to diversity in teaching styles or approaches, all of which could be ‘excellent’, as noted here:

“... there are so many different excellences in teaching, aren’t there? And I think that the crucial thing is not so much to try and narrow them down to one particular thing that constitutes the single model of the excellent university teacher but to see that one of the strengths that a university has is that people will be taught by quite a diverse range of educators and part of their responsibility as students is to respond intelligently to those different styles and work out what’s best for them.”

Recognition of, and sensitivity to, context and complexity means that defining excellence is unlikely to be straightforward. Such a consideration demonstrates an important aspect of teaching excellence that is lacking both in the research literature. Encountering different types of teaching in diverse contexts may in itself be a ‘good thing’ for learning and structures designed to harmonize how teaching is delivered in the light of a singular definition of ‘excellence’ might not have the positive learning effects anticipated.

a. Definitions of teaching excellence:

Academics tended to discuss definitions of teaching excellence in terms of personal frameworks and the direct experiences students had in their classrooms. Staff noted that there were no straightforward, universal, or fixed definitions of excellence and that personal dispositions, motivations and behaviours together formed personal frameworks of excellence for individual teachers. Some staff members talked about ways in which excellence could be defined in terms of the ways in which staff effort might contribute to student engagement and to higher order learning. For example, interviewees noted the importance of defining excellence in terms of student learning rather than in terms of student satisfaction and clarified that this meant excellence in teaching related to enabling higher order thinking.

Whilst there was a sense that there is excellent teaching within the university, some interviewees, however, problematised the notion of “excellence” and suggested that, if excellence was defined as “the truly top of the top”, it was by definition less widespread and may reflect the resource available to teaching staff.

Though by no means universal, for some staff, equipping students for work after graduation was a particularly important facet of excellence in teaching:

“...an excellent teacher takes the long-term view of what graduate attributes, what transferable skills the students are going to need at the end of their programme of study and they look at what knowledge they’re going to need and what skills they’re going to need and then they look at the subject and how they’re going to get students from the start point to the end point.”

Staff also problematised the idea of any straightforward relationship between excellence and innovation:

“...I mean, you can see all the things that you would hope that they’d be... creative and innovative, but is that good in itself, is innovative good in itself? It needs to be pedagogically good. I’m not terribly innovative myself. I tend to have a few ideas and maybe just, just use them. And if you say they’re committed to teaching, all our colleagues, most of our colleagues are committed to teaching so it can’t, it can’t just be that. It’s... excellence. I think it has to be... it has to be creative and innovative but it has to be a self-conscious reflection on teaching and that doesn’t necessarily translate automatically into excellence, but it has to be I think a willingness to try new things, because that stems from not a love of the new for its own sake but a self-conscious set of reflecting on what are you trying to do, and there’s nothing we do that can’t be improved.”

b. Current feelings about teaching – workload and time issues

In general, staff described increased pressures including greater student numbers, reductions in staff in their Schools and increased teaching load. Typically, this has tended to result in reductions in the time staff can spend with students. Those staff with a teaching remit felt that they did not have time to pursue excellence as often their workload meant they could not prepare for teaching in the way they would like to. Difficulties related to work-life balance in this situation were repeated across the interviews from all four Colleges.

In addition to concerns of workload and the ability to be a good teacher in the time available, many of the staff perceived unfairness in the current system. They felt they while they were expected to teach, which consumed most of their time, there was also

an expectation to publish and this expectation seemed to be more important than teaching.

Staff interviewed recognized, however, that the tension was not just related to time for teaching but also the presence of different academic roles in a given academic area: staff felt that the reasons for this were related to two different issues. On the one hand some staff taught so often they didn't have time to prepare for teaching, however, other staff were so busy with research and did so little teaching that they felt therefore this wasn't an important aspect of their job. This was reflected in the interviews in that staff discussed the two separate cultures that existed within the university.

In relation to this, whilst the opportunities for teaching development through the Learning and Teaching Centre and the Learning & Teaching Conference were considered good, there was a sense that there was not the time to engage with them. In this, there was a mismatch between what might be on offer for development and the time necessary to undertake it.

c. *Current feelings about teaching: Seniority and changing expectations*

As staff progress to senior roles, they are more likely to assume administration and leadership tasks, including developing and implementing learning and teaching strategies and surveys or serving on committees. Staff in senior roles reported that they often felt more confident about their teaching practice but also that the extra demands on their time meant that they were less likely to be well-prepared for teaching activities or that teaching activities were "squashed" between other demands and were therefore less satisfying.

d. *Reasons for striving for excellence*

"The satisfaction of seeing the students engage with the subject and become enthusiastic about it and succeed in their studies is the biggest motivator for me."

Staff had a range of reasons for striving for excellence. Evident themes in the interviews were: the importance of making a difference; the importance of having integrity when teaching; and passing on a passion for the subject. The following also featured in the interviews: the drive to enable students to achieve; willingness to improve the learning experience; the chance to communicate a personal intellectual passion; learning something in order to be able to teach it; the pleasure of teaching, and satisfaction from being identified as someone whose teaching has a lasting impact.

Theme 2 - Current Structures

a. *Management of teaching through formal discussion opportunities*

A number of staff described local arrangements for management of teaching and particularly the regular meetings held at local level to discuss teaching arrangements. In general, administrative and organisational considerations tended to dominate these discussions. Some Schools/subject areas offer more focused opportunities, including discussions with students about teaching development, but generally opportunities were considered limited at local level and primarily about management not methods.

b. *Collaboration and co-teaching*

In terms of reward and recognition staff raised several concerns. Firstly, there was the need for collaboration to reflect the complementarity of skills in the team teaching

rather than just being about the individuals in the team all having the same skills: *"I guess I believe that to be an excellent teaching unit you can't be experts in everything...So it's more important to have people who have expertise in specific areas that you can call on when you need to."* This is of particular importance in clarifying what collaborative teaching in a university means.

Within the interviews, reference was made to collaborative teaching as co-teaching in the classroom to differentiate it from large groups of people being individually responsible for sections of a course. Co-teaching was recognized as resource intensive, but considered an effective method for the students and of use developmentally: *"...We do quite a bit of team teaching although, again, not as much as we used to do because it... obviously... that's two members of staff in instead of one member of staff for each session, um... so that's very useful and often we give informal feedback if we have team taught or, you know, I might ask "how do you think that's actually gone?"*

Some interviewees problematised the extent to which evidence of good teaching could be attributed solely to the performance of an individual, or whether teaching was fundamentally a collaborative activity:

"But I think it's true that actually part of the problem is that... often and often depending on the type of thing you're teaching, your being a good teacher consists in your being part of a team that's working together rather well and we certainly wouldn't want to... I mean, if part of what I'm wanting to try and convey to you is that I think that maybe the way that we structure promotion creates some sad or perverse incentives, it'd be rather bad if the effect of sort of trying to give teaching more prominence in that process was to suggest that there's only one type of teaching that we, we value, which is the type of teaching which has a single person at the helm of a very successful and individual sort of course."

Others expressed anxiety about disaggregating individual performance in collaborative teaching contexts.

"There's all sorts of social issues in recognising excellence in teaching because it can erode the camaraderie of a group if you start to make distinctions between people."

c. Peer observation of teaching and mentorship

One senior staff member made the connection between management of teaching and peer review or observation as a mechanism for evaluating whether management of teaching was successful.

"I have not had any experience of receiving or giving peer review teaching. It's not something that we've really done at all, a little bit forum... probationers but not for established colleagues at all. I mean, there's occasionally been some talk about it, and I think probably in the absence of, you know, actual peer observation, it's probably quite difficult to... to say that you're actually managing excellent teaching."

Most staff struggled to recall any systematic or recent instances of peer observation of teaching.

"I do recall now when I come to think of it that... one of our probationers sat in on some of my teaching, just to get a feel for what a first-year class was like. But that was... that was for their benefit rather than for my benefit. I mean, we talked a little bit about how the session had gone and what had been, what had worked and what hadn't worked, but it wasn't done in a way that it was fed back to me. It was just discussing in general."

d. Performance and Development Review

Focus was also given to the current processes of promotion and, in particular, the P&DR form. On a positive note senior staff believed that the university was good at recognising that staff could excel on aspects of their profile and not others. However, staff believed that there was a tendency for the P&DR, as well as job interviews, to have a much larger focus on non-teaching related issues. This was true for both research and teaching and teaching and scholarship staff.

“Teaching isn’t or doesn’t form part of your appraisal at all. I don’t know if you are a teaching person, but I am a sort of research person as well, it’s never figured in anything. It never figured in my interview for a job, it never figured in anything. In actual fact to get my promotion I had to take on the [level] tutorship, so in other words it was an admin thing and as I have progressed I have done less teaching. Em, and... yeah I mean yeah I think there isn’t really any recognition of teaching. Or even, I think this is true not just for teaching schools but every school, there is no person who assesses your pluses and your minuses and says this person is really good at this so we are going to make use of these skills.”

Managers with responsibility for P&DR also noted that discussions rarely focused on teaching quality.

“I would not have had a conversation with people about the quality of their teaching. I would have a conversation about their career development, but I wouldn’t have talked to them about the quality of their teaching and how they might improve that, as such. I would talk to them about how they felt their teaching had gone this year, whether there were issues and development stuff around that, but it wouldn’t have been a very large discussion...”

Concerns were also consistently raised that the current P&DR form failed to distinguish between teaching excellence and teaching competence:

“That’s always going to be an exceptionally hard differential [teaching competence and teaching excellence] to make. Em, I wonder if different people would have, I think they would do wouldn’t they, a different view of what was excellent and what was good, so how on earth do you decide the boundary. Em, I mean I have a slight fear of this in terms of P&DR.”

Some staff had a very negative sense of the current way teaching is viewed and recognised within P&DR, noting that on occasion it is explicitly “negatively recognized”. When expanding on this point the participant elaborated that early career academics, were actively encouraged to avoid teaching as it is seen as less important (indeed a ‘waste of time’) than being an active researcher. This perception was exacerbated by the experience that often line managers did not value teaching, and indeed at times ask them to reduce the commentary they had regarding teaching in their P&DR forms:

“So my line manager, so my head of institute, also did my P&DR, not this year but the previous 2 years and he actually asked me to reduce the level of reporting of my teaching on my P&DR form because he wasn’t interested in it.”

A number of interviewees noted that teaching performance and/or teaching quality just did not tend to feature prominently in the P&DR process:

“In P&DR, learning and teaching are given very little attention; the focus is placed elsewhere and in particular, on publications and research income. It’s assumed that you do a good job in learning and teaching. Moreover, where pressures on time increase, the course of action is almost always to ‘shed’ teaching bybuying out

that activity. However, this is not good practice in terms of students and their expectations of who will be teaching them. Were it not that the interviewee cares about learning and teaching, then they would simply accept the offer of buyout and, as a consequence, disengage to some extent in teaching. More significantly, 'if I'm serious about promotion, I have to care less about teaching and learning'."

Theme 3 – Evidencing Teaching Excellence

The challenge of evidencing excellence or exceptionalism in teaching is a feature of the interviewees' responses to questions about P&DR, promotions processes, and in general. Interviewees reflected on the value and limitations of student feedback.

"If students through feedback and anecdotally are saying that was excellent, that was terrific, I really enjoyed that, then there has to be excellence going on. How you tell it's been excellent is a whole other issue. Because you get into oh, that was a fantastic lecture or that was a great lecture, and then I really loved your course, and then they fail your exam, and you think right, okay, so if I'm such an excellent teacher what went wrong."

"Well, you're tempted to say results and student feedback. If they're getting through and the external examiner's happy and the students are happy, I think the problem is how you would deconstruct that to see what you've done that works to produce that result. So I'm not sure the evaluation - and, again, if you look at the feedback you can usually see what you've done right and what you've done wrong. I feel a good external examiner, and we've been very fortunate, I've never had a bad external examiner I've always been very fortunate there, and you - I mean, I think it's a well-constructed feedback questionnaire from students and I think you could build into that, perhaps we don't do this enough formally, meetings with students, feedback meetings."

A number of interviewees noted the temporal nature of evaluation, the difficulty of demonstrating impact over time and of making cause and effect judgments:

"How do you know that what you are doing today will make a difference because you won't even really see possibly in two generations and by that stage you won't know if it's what you did or what someone else did or whether it's the combination of a whole twenty years of intervention that's produced that, but you have to make sure that all those feeders are there and you can't always measure them and I think that's, that's one of the challenges around this whole idea of teaching excellence. What would it look like? How would we measure it?"

"The methods that we use are not always satisfactory in terms of capturing what people think over a period of time. Because, remember, you have the students over a period of time, and they might either like it at the beginning and not like it at the end, or not like it at the beginning and like it at the end, that kind of thing. And, it's not really about liking, it's about getting something out of the teaching..."

Interviewees commented on the problematic nature of collecting systematic, meaningful data about teaching and about the dangers of a measurement culture:

"I suppose what's happened is that with more and more emphasis on measurable things, those things which are easy to measure like how much money you bring in grant income, more emphasis is put on that and on writing a book. The difficulty there being is that you can actually do very important, ground-breaking work, sometimes more readily in an article than in a book, but you know, so there's again,

talking about research now, but shall we say over-emphasis on the book as if that's the only thing that maybe is gonna be treated as ground-breaking. And therefore those things which are by definition much more difficult to measure, teaching excellence... just naturally sort of seem to fall into the background."

"... it's very important we don't allow a search for what's easily measurable to end up dictating what we regard as good or bad teaching."

Academics who speculated on new types of data that could be used to evidence individual performance suggested, for example, collecting references from former students.

"So one question that I had is that there's something that is kind of common practice in the States, I think, which is not common practice here, which is that in addition to having sort of peer references, sort of speaking to your research strengths and prominence, it's often a part of the process of applying for jobs in the States that you will have references from students. Now, obviously there are a hundred reasons why such things are going to be, suffer from selection bias and be unreliable in various ways but no less unreliable than peer, selected peer referees for the research side, so if we as a university think that it's appropriate to use references from your academic peers as a way of assessing your research strength, then I can see no principled reason why we couldn't build on that type of practice to get student references, teaching references either from students or from GTA's who work on people's courses or things like that."

Theme 4 – Improving Reward and Recognition –Recommendations from the Colleges

Suggestion for Improvement	Example of the Evidence Provided
<u>General Recommendations</u>	
Improved signaling from senior management about the importance of teaching	"Senior leadership in the College could give out very clear signals that teaching is very positively valued, as well as all the other things that I do but less of a... less of a... absolutely understandable strategically but less of a fetishisation on research-generated income as the absolute good compared to which others are secondary."
Standardised measures of teaching excellence	"It [measuring teaching excellence], it has to link to, if it is going, if it is going to look after education em, the university would have to apply to education what it applies to research. You know we don't do education selectivity exercises we do do research selectivity exercises. We sort of assume that the happy student and this grading that we get from, from the poll every year is enough. But that doesn't interrogate individual members of staff and it doesn't really interrogate excellence. Em, we would have to have a tool to measure educational excellence and I don't think we have it at the moment." "If we had a better measure of, eh, learning and

	<p>teaching. You know a more official or more nationalised or standardised measure, em, of a the outputs of teaching I think that would be a much better way to... you know, it would give us a framework in which we can say well I contributed to this particular part and I contributed to that part.”</p>
<p>Enhanced recognition and visibility for Professors of Teaching and Learning</p>	<p>“Maybe the other answer is to create a more visible professorial recognition of teaching and learning. I think that might be a good way of doing it because it says, there you go. But I think with that kind of role you’ve got to be really careful that you are engaging the staff in identifying who the individuals are that are deserving of that.”</p> <p>“I think you would be committed to...you would want to know...well, I'm assuming...I mean, I think obviously there's still going to be a research element in that they're going to write about learning and teaching, aren't they, if they're a Professor of it. But I think their main concern ought to be about understanding the quality of the teaching within the school and I think their job should be to help people seriously enhance what they do. I think it should be a hands-on teaching development, staff development focus. And I think the fact that there was somebody who cared about it would have enormous impact, just because someone was there.”</p>
<p>Graduate locations as a measure of teaching excellence</p>	<p>“A few of my students have gone on to do PhDs in different places and em, in fact I got a message from one just over the weekend who had just handed in her PhD. Or they have gone on to do clinical psychology... so I think that is a good sign.</p>
<p>Recognising teaching excellence from the graduate attributes of the students on leaving university, as judged by external sources.</p>	<p>“You know an employer is the best person to know because they are the people that get to compare graduates in the workplace where they are supposed to be changing the world and I think also things like student confidence to tackle the world. So instead of saying, instead of being reflective- how many of you liked your lecturers.”</p> <p>“I think graduate attributes tells us about teaching excellence. Transferable skills tells us about teaching excellence”.</p> <p>No, I mean I think, I think we, we really have, if the university wants to deliver top level education it has to be realistic about what it is- it is not just a happy student. It has to find a tool to actually look at what it really is, you know go to [name of company] and ask them if they are happy with the products that come</p>

	<p>out of here. Or companies and, you know, we can do that in science. It is maybe harder to do that in arts. We can do it in science. Em, ask the quality of the product and it's not all bad by any means I mean we are putting out some very good students. But we are not doing our best and we are not doing our best because at the moment from a personal, every single academic who is meant to be doing research and a bit of teaching is feeling huge pressure, crippling pressure to deliver on research. I mean, I mean, people feeling real... you almost medical levels of stress, em, and you just can't pretend that that doesn't impact on education, it impacts negatively on it and until that cycle is broken you've got real problems."</p>
<p>Need for greater clarity from the university on the role of the UT- giving them areas of expertise</p>	<p>"I think the whole thing actually reflects a double mindedness in the university in terms of I don't think they are sure really what the teaching and scholarship contract should look like. So I think on the one hand they want teachers to do all the teaching to free up the research staff, that's the cynical view of what the university teacher post is. Em and so they have, I don't know if they still have but certainly they used to have regulations about something like 450 contact hours or I don't know how much it actually was, but some massive number of contact hours. So that seems to be the bread and butter of the job and the hobbies associated with the job that you can't do in the 9-5 eh is all the other stuff the scholarship and the internationalisation and the esteem indicators and so on and I guess, I guess on one level is the more positive view of what the university teacher role should be. We should be ideally, with the time allowed, we should be the people who are at the forefront of this and developing and innovating and publishing and leading the way in how teaching is done."</p> <p>"I think one, I think what the problem we have at the moment, the problem is that eh, we don't know what we want of university teachers in particular, we really don't know what we want and it strikes me that em, this is what I think we should want- we should want evidence of scholarship but the scholarship should not be simply about, or only about em teaching, it just seems to me it has evolved there, it's evolved that way from bureaucracy and I think it's a real problem."</p> <p>"University Teachers, I would like university teachers to clearly have areas of speciality that they were reading all of the time. So, you know, not just using university teachers very generally, but where we had</p>

	<p>university teachers that had clear speciality and even if they are not doing academic research”</p>
<p>Amount of publications- both within area of research and pedagogy & encouragement to publish even if not REF returnable</p>	<p>Some staff thought that they should be recognised for both their teaching research and also research they do within their expertise. They thought this was particularly important because they worked within the context of a research intensive institution; “probably both but not pedagogy so much as a more research oriented version because we are a research institution”</p> <p>“I think they should be encouraging people to do eh research even if it is not REF drive and I think, I think and it could be in any area so I think that is really important and that should be part of the package.”</p>
<p>More opportunities to show case teaching innovation through seminars</p>	<p>“Maybe a better way would be em for us to have seminar series where we can share practice because sharing practice I think is one of the best ways in which to em, bring other people into the fold, to show them what kind of teaching is involved.”</p>
<p>Supporting university teachers to attend subject specific conferences</p>	<p>“See I worry that too many university teachers wander off to educational topic for conferences. That’s fine, but go to a research, whatever areas of science you are interested in, go to that as well. That is critical to me. So, I would like to see our university teachers organised in, eh, fields, subject areas that we know are important and maintaining you know journal clubs where they discuss not just education but the scientific field there are in. That is, that’s the difference between school and university to me so, that is the extra tease that is critical.”</p> <p>“I think we should have a more explicit funding of conferences for eh the, the teaching only streams I think that would be, these are ways of helping and supporting it.”</p>
<p>Increased awareness of the amount of hours that go into supporting teaching related issues including admin and marking</p>	<p>“And even the admin thing, because I actually think there I a fussy line between teaching and admin and I imagine that is true in all levels, but in level 4 certainly people who come with problems you end up doing a lot of teaching related things. Like helping them with studying, or negotiating things with people and all the rest of it and I think that the perception of the university is that that takes no time...”</p> <p>“The huge amount of work that goes into marking and providing feedback to level one and two students. There are a large number of students that need marking there, I think some of the school’s, the rest of the school’s staff experience a lot of that when they</p>

	<p>mark the exam scripts. But most em, most of them don't see the day to day marking of this huge number of scripts and the very short amount of time that we have available for that. That is not something you can show, you know in terms of measures of success, I feel it is a fantastic achievement when I have made my way through 100 scripts and they, and the feedback is appropriate. Another person doesn't see that as important at all, but I think it's, I think it's really important."</p>
<p>Recognition that context is important and therefore there can be no one method of recognising teaching excellence</p>	<p>"I don't have an answer to that question [how should we reward and recognise teaching excellence] in terms of a recipe for how you can do it. Because I think different teachers deliver excellent teaching in different ways and in very different contexts. What is right in one context might not be right in another so there is no one size fits all method of evaluation."</p>
<p>Nominations for teaching excellence awards</p>	<p>"[name of member of staff] was nominated as em, the best em, project supervisor in the past because of the way that she approaches it the opportunities that she gives students. Now it is not possible to give every single student that opportunity, em, but I think those kinds of things, being able to measure them would be really valuable."</p>
<p>Changing the perceptions of other staff in the school by changing the teaching role.</p>	<p>"I also have a perception that it's going to be down to me to see the rest of the school value me and I think there are people within our team that are seen in that light, em throughout the rest of the school, the job they do. But one of the things that I was thinking would be really, if we can change staff perceptions in the way that they see university teachers or the teaching staff because at the moment we, we seem to form a niche team that works specifically towards marking assessments and those kinds of things but there is other valuable things that we can do. For instance people could come to use to ask to share practice em, so some of the things that we might have read about or some of the things that we would, we would do it would be better if we, it would be really good if people came to us to ask the questions and towards that I think potentially would be very valuable if em, for every new lecturer they had two mentors- one who was a teaching mentor and one who was a research mentor. Just so that they could realise that teaching is actually a really important part of the university and that it is taken seriously"</p>
<p>Changing job titles of UTs may help change perceptions</p>	<p>"When they changed people's title to University Teacher I don't think that was a good thing because we are all on the same pay scale, we are all doing the same thing only maybe we don't do so much research</p>

	<p>or maybe we don't do any research and I don't see what that has any relevance anymore. And I think it, it causes a division and it certainly causes a division in here where people are seen to be lower down the fellow-genetic scale if you like [laughs]. So down there with the monkeys. So, I think it's served its day and I think it should stop and I think people should be recognised for what they do.it just doesn't make sense to anybody and people outside don't understand what it is and they think it's some kind of teaching assistance when it is clearly not. It's at the same level as someone who has a lectureship and I think that should be recognised and I think people work hard for this university and UTs work hard and the place would be the place it is without them."</p>
<p>Consider merging the RT & UT tracks</p>	<p>"Once you have two categories, they are never really going to be equal. You know, you can say that they are, but that is not how the world works. If you have two categories, one is preferred over the other, that's the way I think it always shapes out. So merging that, I think that would be good. Although you would then genuinely have to value different profiles, wouldn't you, rather than say you do but don't."</p>
<p>Better understanding of the role of University Teachers on promotions panels</p>	<p>"Well, I think part of it, for the promotion committees, I think - we're talking about the guidelines - and I think more clarity would be good, and to have the chair of a committee make sure that when people are talking about University Teachers, that actually everyone on that committee is in the same place on that."</p>
<p>Opportunity to select primary criteria for promotion</p>	<p>"I've just seen some of the promotion criteria for King's London where the applicant can select on which criteria they'd like to be the primary one upon which they are considered – admin, research, clinical excellence, teaching – and of course this evidence then comes into play, but they can give a steer in their application and say 'above all I want to be considered on this particular criteria' which I think is quite interesting, as a... what are other institutions doing."</p>
<p>Consider changes to the way that evidence is gathered and evaluated for promotion.</p>	<p>"It should actually be an independent panel of three people, or something of that size. And what you're doing is, they actually get a chance to come and see you teach, to look at your scholarship, to see the evidence base that you've actually got, that you actually, you know, spend a wee bit of time looking through your lectures, talk to the kids, have a look at the feedback from your students. But actually seeing you in action, both in the tutorials and also having a look at your management as well, and talk to some of your colleagues. I think that would be hugely onerous</p>

	<p>job, but actually, it would actually give people, if they were doing a good job, a sample of each of the main criteria required to be considered for promotion. Because the way things stand just now, the chances of us getting promotion is virtually nil. It's not just slight, it's virtually nil."</p>
<p>Changes to the promotions process to create comparable opportunities for UTs and ULs</p>	<p>"If you're sitting in a senior university teacher, you kind of go, well, that's a huge jump to a chair, whereas, if you're on the research path and an obvious thing to apply for, not just by default of not getting the chair, but to apply for, is the reader. It lets you, as a senior university lecturer, then look at building your profile to take that step to reader and then when you're settled in reader, to start looking at your profile and moving... So, you've got that comfortable intermediary step, whereas, for a university teacher, you're looking and going, how am I ever going to get to the stage where...? I'm doing everything that's required of a... Because, you would only apply for a chair when you get to the stage where you think..."</p>
<p><u>Specific Recommendations for the P&DR Process</u></p>	
<p>Changes to the P&DR to promote discussion about teaching quality and teaching engagement</p>	<p>"But to come back to the issue of should we recognise that more in P&DR, yes, I think it could be brought into P&DR, that would be great, cos at the moment it's just, it's more of a... I think what they're trying to do now is are you, are you putting in an adequate effort, are you teaching the right number of hours at the right levels, are you... are you pulling your weight, and so it's more... OK, fine, I can tick you off as being working at an appropriate quantity but there's nothing about quality."</p>
<p>Potential for creation of categories of teaching performance (both for P&DR and for promotion)</p>	<p>"I would have thought you could have put in categories. I mean, this issue of quantity versus quality within what you're doing and then also leadership and innovation. Those certainly could be added."</p>
<p>Taking into account long term performance over a number of years</p>	<p>"The things that take into account performance in the longer term are over a number of years, I think are probably the best indicators."</p>
<p>Changes to the P&DR to promote discussion about teaching quality and teaching engagement</p>	<p>"But to come back to the issue of should we recognise that more in P&DR, yes, I think it could be brought into P&DR, that would be great, cos at the moment it's just, it's more of a... I think what they're trying to do now is are you, are you putting in an adequate effort, are you teaching the right number of hours at the right levels, are you... are you pulling your weight,</p>

	and so it's more... OK, fine, I can tick you off as being working at an appropriate quantity but there's nothing about quality."
Teaching should be judged on day to day working of a University Teacher	<p>"Does the performance and development review form actually ask people to comment on the quality of their teaching? I mean it does all seem to be about scholarship and publications and international influence and transforming society and so on and yeah if you've got time to do all of that as well as the day-to-day job of actually teaching, then yeah fine, but again I don't think that everyone does have time to do that or want to sacrifice everything in order to do that."</p> <p>"Yeah and I think, I think the reasons that's tricky [to promote teaching staff] is that for the research staff their 9-5 job is also what they are evaluated on in terms of promotion. So they are here to do research and that's what gets them promoted. Whereas for us it is different we are here to do something else- we are here to teach but it is all the scholarship, that yeah they are actually interested in which is disheartening to say the least and quite demotivating."</p>
Integration of P&DR process with mentoring and support	"I loved my P&DR, how creepy is that? It was so helpful and I'm in this women's mentoring scheme as well so my mentor is brilliant as well, plus I'm mentoring someone else, so you kind of - and it's just a thoroughly positive experience. You can't judge everything by your own experience. Other people hate their P&DR, they think it's..."
Ensuring each part of a collaborative activity can be attributed to an individual	"Well because em, because all of the components of the collaborative activity can be traced to an individual and you may make your contribution by em doing a lot of lecturing. You may make your contribution by writing a lot of support material, it doesn't matter that, you know you can't point to excellence in that you have responsibility and accountability for, so I don't see, I don't see any trouble"
<u>Local Practice</u>	
Enhanced opportunities at local level to discuss teaching quality	<p>"I think subjects need to create a culture in which it's OK to talk about teaching methods."</p> <p>"We do make efforts to have research seminars, research groups and there is scope and space for us to be able to talk about various projects and stuff like that. So, if we had the equivalent of that for the teaching aspect of it that would be helpful wouldn't it? Even if it was every so often people volunteered to</p>

	<p>present something that went really well in their teaching, that they could share that might be useful to other people.</p>
<p>Peer Evaluation/evaluation/mentoring of teaching practice from senior colleagues</p>	<p>“I think there’s a reason to think that people who have demonstrated good teaching in the past it makes sense to use that expertise to help mentor and nurture junior teachers”</p> <p>“I guess I think peer evaluation can be pretty useful cause I think that em, peer evaluation or senior people evaluating, people who have experience with how people teach evaluating... is probably pretty good”</p> <p>“I guess also the view of the line manager or director of teaching would be important”</p>
<p>Increased importance of peer observation</p>	<p>“I think that I guess more of that has to be from observation, peer observation of the teaching because I don’t, I really don’t think in that situation, unless it is very very very positive or very very negative you are not going to hear back from the students cause they, they are smart kids and they look at their time, how much time they have and have to, they know if they are going to feedback and they know that person is not only going to be teaching a couple of lectures and then they are going to be moving onto someone else they are not going to waste their time giving feedback unless it is hugely extreme one way or the other.”</p> <p>“At the same time it’s quite valuable to have someone else’s perspective on how you are delivering that teaching because it is very easy to be very involved in what you are trying to do and not necessarily see the woods for the trees if you see what I mean.”</p>
<p>Importance of sharing of good practice in team meetings</p>	<p>“I am a bit isolated I think, I have been isolated until very recently not being part of a group who were interested in teaching. So most of my teaching is done by myself and I don’t see others teaching.”</p> <p>“One of the ways would be, em, so for instance the meetings that we have-....that would be one way to show excellence in teaching so encouraging people to come along to that and listen to what has happened and at one level see if that work might be shared and for the other levels ”.</p> <p>“... getting teaching to the point where it is discussed routinely as opposed to being like a toilet habit or something you don’t talk about. Would be the biggest</p>

	<p>step forward because as it is... the only place I think it occurs is in good course teams. But that is just one course team, that's not going across boundaries. So, whereas researchers, if they can't get it in their department they have certainly got it in their research conference networks. So it's about establishing that atmosphere and I think really we could do a lot better. So, I think the essence of it would be where the atmosphere is about sharing results and methods. So that is true in research; it should be true in teaching. It should be normal to have a yatter about your methods and what doesn't work and oohh."</p>
<p><u>Student Feedback</u></p>	
<p>Student feedback</p>	<p>"I mean first it is to try and decide is it, is it a one off criticism. I mean you get one or two students ever year that you have to decide is this just a, you know, a random bit of noise. Usually there is pattern where something hasn't worked particularly well. So, you can see, see a comment coming from more than one person rather than single person."</p> <p>However, staff were also very aware of the problems associated with student feedback and reflected on the fact that making students "happy" does not always mean students are learning</p> <p>"Unhappy students you have a problem, you do have a problem- face up to it. My fear is, and I know, I can think of, people, one or two people about the place I have come across about our locality that, eh, that don't push, in my option, students hard enough at level 3 level 4 and it's too much little hooks of interesting stories which can entertain. And it's not that they are not interesting, they are interesting, but when it comes to level 3 level 4 you really need to go into depth where students feel stressed at times."</p> <p>"I always encourage students to feedback to me through either, as a course coordinator for [name of course] we organise one to one, or one to two interviews with all the students em, partly to feedback to them on how they are doing and what they need to work on but also to give them the opportunity to feedback to us and discuss things about the course with us, which some students take full advantage of."</p> <p>"Well I think the obvious one is the student feedback because if you, if you're an excellent teacher then your student feedback should be positive. I mean you are always going to get the odd troll in there because you didn't answer an email or you said something about their coursework they didn't like. But if one the</p>

	whole you get excellent feedback from the students then that has got to be a factor.”
Getting only a percentage of the students to evaluate each of the teachers to avoid fatigue	“Or, you know, em, or perhaps using a targeting approach where a certain percentage have to mention, review, developmental or whatever. I think, em, partly because I think there’s, there’s there’s em, there is a fatigue issue just going, and it’s also not really fair, is it? To sort of compare someone who is doing experimental design to someone who is doing you know.”
However, also recognising that student feedback is problematic when different staff do smaller amounts of teaching	“Em... I do think really the feedback from the students but I think recognising the fact that the way we structure our degree, so maybe for other people it might work better and I really think when I talk at central learning and teaching meetings I feel like the feedback system that they intend will work better with many other units than ours, because they don’t tend to have the majority of staff just coming in and doing a couple of lecturers. If you do a whole course even after one year the feedback is very very useful. Em, if it is just one or two lectures the students don’t remember and they are not going to rate every lecturer effectively. So I think the model we have is particularly difficult to reward teaching excellence in I think.”
Changes to the way we ask for feedback from students. Move to asking about development rather than enjoyment.	“We would be better saying how many of you feel inspired to use this stuff. But actually the most important thing is, regardless of whether you liked it, you might have absolutely hated it like some kind of a boot camp, but do you feel that you are in a better position than most other people to go out and change the world now and that would be a much better measure. Forget saying, do you like Glasgow University? Because what are they going to say? But something like, you know, how ready are you to tackle the world. And if all of your students said wow I can’t wait to get in there and some other university has students saying oh God do I have to get a job now then you sort of think well that is a really good important thing and I don’t know if that ever really gets asked in anyway. So I think that would be a good way.”

3. Students' perceptions of excellence: Findings from the Student Data

Introduction

This section synthesizes data collected from an element of the LTDF project as well as the nominations from the Student-led Teaching Awards. More specifically, the analysis draws on:

1. Outcomes of the student-led research within the LTDF project.. Students were recruited to be responsible for the collection of data about students' perceptions of teaching excellence. Four students were recruited to be interns on the project. The initial aim was that one student from each of the 4 Schools involved would be selected. However, due to problems with accessing students from some of the Schools this was not the case. Three of the students were from a School within the College of Science and Engineering and one student was from a School within the College of Arts. Each of the 4 students was allocated to collect data from one of 4 Schools and they were responsible for conducting semi-structured interviews with students from that School. All of the students conducted 4-6 student interviews. Further, the student interns were also responsible for the organisation of one focus group with students in their School, which they ran with the support of a research assistant.
2. The Student Representative Council's (SRC) documentation relating to nominations for the University of Glasgow's Student-Led Teaching Awards (SLTAs) over a three year period (academic sessions 2011/12; 2012/13 and 2013/13)SLTAs in which Undergraduate and postgraduate students are invited to nominate staff members for consideration for an award under the following categories: Best Advisor of Studies; Best class representative; best College tutor; best postgraduate who teaches; best supervisor; best support staff; focus on employability award.

In order to draw key messages both the students' descriptions and the data from three years of nominations have been analysed according to the following criteria derived from the 2013 literature review for the Higher Education Academy:²

- Curriculum Design
- Knowledge of the Subject
- Ability to Inspire and Motivate
- Respect and Care for Students as Individuals
- Active and Group Learning
- Critical and Scholarly
- Engagement in Assessment

Key Findings

Findings from the student interviews and focus groups held as part of the LTDF Teaching Excellence Project suggest that there is little consensus on what constitutes "excellent"

² *Considering Teaching Excellence in Higher Education: 2007-2013*
http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/documents/research/TELR_final_acknowledgements.pdf

teaching and that students' response to the teaching styles and practices of individual members of staff can vary significantly.

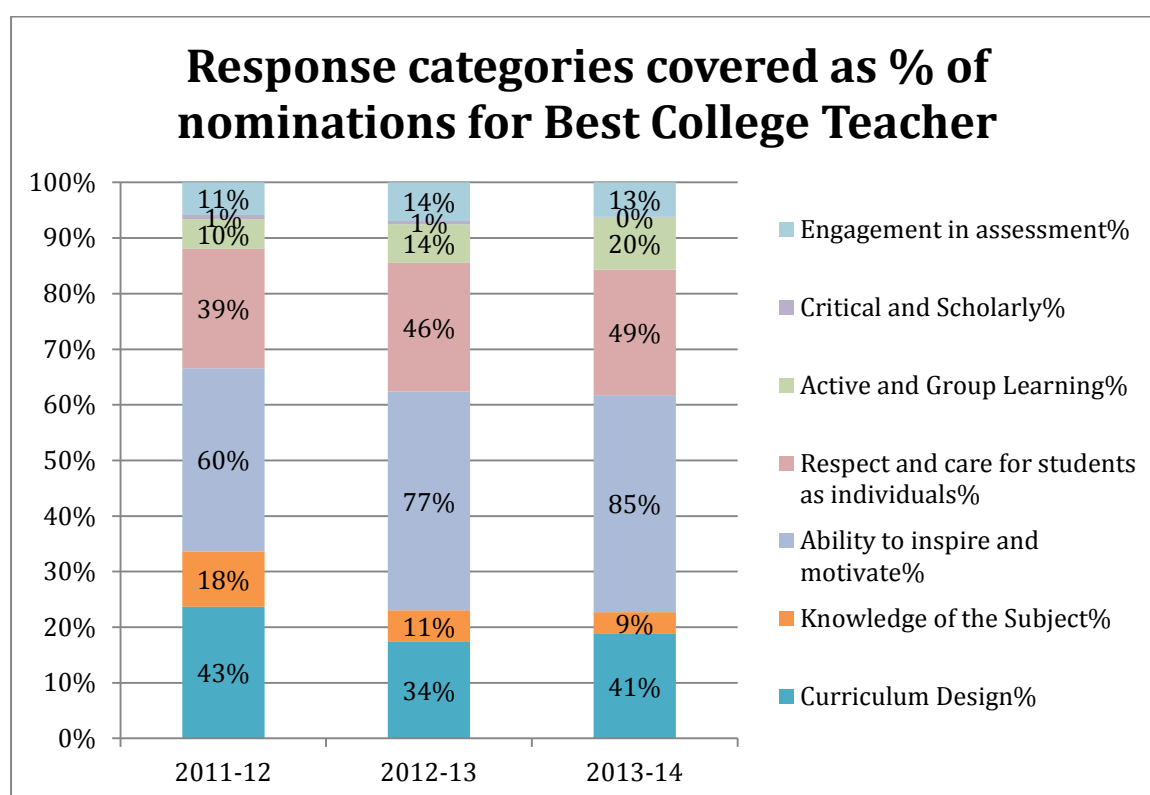
The HEA's 2012 report on Student-Led Teaching Awards indicates that two dimensions of excellence have emerged as key themes as the use of STLAs has expanded across the sector:

- The personal attributes of the style of the lecturer or tutor
- The content, structure and delivery of sessions

The data from the University of Glasgow's STAs suggests that students most value:

- The ability to inspire and motivate
- Respect and care for students as individuals.

Findings by Category



Percentage of SLTA responses to coded categories in Best Teacher Category Only

Curriculum Design

Typically, students report the following valued characteristics of teaching practice:

- Good supporting materials, including clear PowerPoint slides, detailed hand-outs, additional reading, additional materials on Moodle
- Use of multimedia (for example, video clips) or other "props" to explain concepts.
- Use of innovative technology (for example, electronic classroom voting systems)
- Teaching designs that promote active learning (for example, group projects or students being asked to present in class)
- Clear diction and delivery is important to students whose first language is not English.

The data from both the SLTAs and the student focus groups and interviews demonstrate that there is little consensus about preferred teaching styles. Although some staff members were nominated for innovative practice (for example, the use of electronic voting systems) it is unclear whether all students in the relevant classes value such innovation.

Knowledge of the Subject

This criterion is relatively under-populated in the data. Where students do describe teachers in terms of knowledge, they tend to focus on the process of knowledge transfer from teacher to student. Being 'knowledgeable' is not in itself enough: students value the way in which knowledge is harnessed to broaden understanding.

Ability to Inspire and Motivate

Dimensions of "inspirational" or "motivational" noted include:

- Entertaining delivery: use of humour, music, props, small treats etc.
- Passion and enthusiasm for the subject

Respect and Care for Students as Individuals

The importance placed by students on personal contact with teaching staff and support staff at the university can hardly be over-estimated. Dimensions of personal contact include:

- Learning students' names and using them in class
- Answering student questions and concerns at the end of classes
- Availability to answer student questions and concerns outside class ("open door" policy)
- Availability to answer student questions and concerns by email or via Moodle or other online platforms
- Telephone tutorials or other support
- Advice on specific aspects of learning and/or development (for example, further study or employability)
- Care and concern in times of personal difficulty (including negotiating extensions or other concessions)
- Friendliness and approachability
- Participation in student activities, or informal activities (for example, going to the pub)

Active and Group Learning

Students typically reported:

- Teachers who encouraged class participation and discussion
- Group tasks and projects
- In-class quizzes and problems
- Regular homework and out-of-class exercises and discussions (often via Moodle)

Critical and Scholarly

The almost complete absence of description of critical and/or scholarly behaviours and activities in the SLTA data relating to undergraduates suggests that students at this level are not equipped to recognise or articulate how scholarship and research relate to the taught experience at the University. Postgraduate students, particularly those undertaking PhD studies, are much more likely to comment on the ways in which staff contribute to development of scholarship.

Engagement in Assessment

Data from the SLTAs includes the following dimensions of valued engagement in assessment:

- Timely (often speedy) delivery of feedback
- Linking feedback to broader student concerns (for example, employability)
- Provision of revision lectures/practice examinations/exam support
- Innovative coursework/assessments
- Perception of fairness

Conclusions from Student Data-set

The HEA's 2012 report on SLTAs notes that institutional SLTA data offer considerable potential for better understanding students' conception of teaching excellence. The same report, nonetheless, also notes that SLTA schemes which do not offer specific criteria and guidance on creation of nomination justifications are most likely to result in "personal, emotional responses from students" and the data from Glasgow supports this finding.

Across all the data, the theme of personal care and interest from teaching and support staff is uppermost in students' concerns. The extent to which personalisation of the learning experience means staff offering additional (and often out of hours) support time to students has clear resource implications, as well as implications for staff health and productivity. It seems clear that students perceive teaching staff, (and the auxiliary staff they encounter in teaching environments) as both mentors and as sources of pastoral, and emotional care.

There was considerable discussion among the project team about the role which SLTAs can play in evidencing teaching excellence. The College Leads agreed that while staff very much value winning or being shortlisted for an SLTA, and while the nomination can be useful among other sources of evidence reflecting the student voice, nonetheless the awards themselves should not be considered to be as important as other measures in evidencing teaching excellence. This is because the method of selecting winners is not as robust as that for selecting TEAs, nor is the evidence drawn from as large a pool as student course evaluations.

However, it might be that patterns of frequent and repeated nominations (as distinct from winning or being shortlisted) might provide more reliable evidence, since such patterns would indicate more sustained and more widespread perception of excellence. At present, however, though nominations by category and by individual staff member are recorded, they are not published.

4. Discussion

Five central themes emerged from the activities of this LTDF project:

- Managers' dilemmas and the related need for flexible work-planning creates tensions around opportunities to progress in an academic career via teaching excellence;
- There are university-wide concerns about the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning in terms of opportunities to pursue it and how it is measured and valued
- Teaching as a collaborative endeavour is under-represented in current methods of reward and recognition;
- Student-led Teaching Awards fulfil a particular role in giving the students a voice to articulate judgements of teaching excellence from their frame of reference;
- Professionalising academic teaching and providing opportunities for career progression is difficult.

Managers' Dilemmas: Flexible Work-Planning

- There are clearly tensions between the need managers feel to balance research and teaching requirement in the face of increased research pressures across the sector and the growing expectations amongst numbers of students. More In the recruitment of new staff there are clear pressures to appoint R&T academics, even if the vacancy has arisen from a T&S staff member leaving. Where, the new R&T staff member requires ECPD teaching protection which in turn means that even more of the original T&S's teaching load needs to be redistributed among a smaller number of T&S and other R&T staff. This increases the amount to be delivered and decreases the amount of time available to T&S staff to excel in the other aspects of their contract, thereby leaving existing T&S staff trapped in place rather than seeing them promoted.
- Within any School/College there are a finite number of actual possible teaching-related administrative or leadership roles which could be used to demonstrate excellence beyond the normal criteria relating to planning and delivery. This means there are limited opportunities from which to demonstrate outstanding educational leadership and management in situ. There is a perception that the consequential competition for roles encourages managers to ensure their R&T staff get access to opportunities which enable progression, at the expense of T&S staff.
- Rapid increases in student recruitment can mean crisis management of teaching on some programmes. One way of ensuring that teaching continuity is not adversely affected is to increase the delivery hours of the staff identified as T&Ss, a practice that has been identified during this project. This particular solution, however, leaves T&Ss operating like full-time, permanent associate or adjunct staff undertaking teaching duties almost to the exclusion of any other work. The key reason for the development of the T&S track originally was to move away from such a model to indicate a level of academic professionalism and a developmental career that appropriately matched the importance of the roles teaching-focused, scholarly staff play in the delivery of effective higher education. If this approach continues to occur, however, it is difficult to see how the wider contractual obligations to these staff will be fulfilled.

Concerns about Scholarship

There are three central tensions concerning the Scholarship aspect of the current promotions criteria:

- confusion as to what Scholarship is and does;
- the perception of the relative worth of Scholarship in comparison with research;
- workload planning and management and the relative effects on colleagues' ability to meet the requirements of the promotion criteria.

1. Confusion

Despite scholarship being a central pillar of the T&S track since its inception, there is an apparent lack of clarity as to what actually constitutes scholarship. There was some confusion evident in the interviews as to whether disciplinary research can be interpreted to fulfill the scholarship category in promotions applications even though the promotion criteria explicitly state that scholarship can be 'in the subject discipline or in teaching related research'.

There were mixed perceptions from the staff we interviewed. In one School, staff were unsure of what the institution/their School wanted from them and were attempting to navigate between balancing their specialist knowledge in their own area, and publishing in pedagogical outputs. In another, the desire to maintain a research profile as a way of meeting the scholarship criteria was the central definition with a concomitant perceived lack of clarity of this from promotions committees. There was also a lack of clarity around the difference between preparation for teaching (maintaining a currency in the discipline) and producing applied educational research / scholarship that demonstrated their knowledge of the literature relating to student learning and higher education teaching in some of the interviews related to one School.

2. Intellectual standing and relative worth:

SoTL, as one specific form of scholarship is perceived as having less intellectual standing/capital within the University and is variously experienced as being viewed as: 'weak research', that is research that is not able to achieve 3* or above standing within a REF metric. This is a dominant perception. This is also a highly problematic view because SoTL tends to be an applied form of scholarship with a predominantly local impact in the first instance. This is what it is meant to do and as such is not, in the first instance, commensurate with the REF metrics applied at the University of Glasgow (focus on 3*-4* journals etc); thus comparisons with REF research should be avoided.

In MVLS, one interviewee identified an additional concern, namely that pedagogic research and SoTL were very different methodologically from the scientific research that was respected within certain disciplines. This difference was believed to mean that SoTL was perceived as weaker than scientific research.

3. Workload Management and Promotions Criteria

There are problems with the ways in which the proportion of time notionally allocated to scholarship for T&S track colleagues is managed in comparison with the proportion of time notionally allocated to research for R&T track colleagues. Key issues to be considered as a matter of urgency include:

- *The different workload protections necessary to enable academic staff on the various tracks to pursue promotion:*
The University's Workload group has allocated a notional 1/3 of R&T colleagues' workload for research in order to ensure that staff have the opportunity to meet the REF obligations. For colleagues on the T&S track, however, the Workload group has allocated a notional 10% for scholarship. If there is no expected REF-related parity between scholarship and research then the workload allowance seems appropriate. However, if that is the case, scholarship should *no longer* be measured predominantly in terms of publication as is perceived to be currently happening, but clearly include "other forms of externally recognised professional practice or creative outputs of a standing equivalent to regular publication of original research" and

examples of these should be given to promotions panels for clarity and standards' consistency.

- *Management of workload allocations*
There is considerable variation in practice in terms of how staff (on either track) are treated. R&T staff are not always able to devote 1/3 of their time to research. In fact the majority would claim that this fraction is espoused rather than experienced. Nonetheless, some managers are able to protect time for their staff more successfully than others. Similarly, some staff on T&S tracks enjoy more than 10% of their time for scholarship whereas others do not due to teaching demands within their School/subject. To ensure equality of opportunity for all staff, clarity about workload expectations and consistency of implementation is essential.
- *Types of publication valued*
If publications in the form of journal outputs are essential for a grade 10 Learning & Teaching Chair, then it remains the case that it's probably easier for someone on an R&T track to move across to a Chair T&S than it is for someone on the T&S track to progress within the T&S track. There is also a view that this applies at the SL/ST&S level.

Teaching as a Collaborative Endeavour

During the interviews staff reflected on the sometimes collaborative nature of teaching, particularly at levels 1 & 2. Ensuring that collaborative activity and problem solving are valued is difficult because at the moment P&DR/ promotions focus on individual excellence rather than finding ways of evidencing outstanding team/collective achievement. The complexities of collaborative problem solving are often obscured by the effectiveness of teaching teams who enable continuity of delivery through a range of challenges in a manner that ensures negative impacts on student experience are minimized. When and how this is done is difficult to demonstrate in a manner that fulfills the current teaching criteria Collaborative and team working is a central aspect of teaching excellence, but current systems of promotion and P&DR do not emphasise this.

Student-led Teaching Awards fulfill a Particular Role

Whilst there is evidence from Glasgow's data that many students do have a sophisticated understanding of successful teaching, many others are content to commend lecturers with lively presenting styles or use of media without further reflection on any contribution to learning experiences or indeed outcomes. Given the academic concern regarding how relevant these aspects are to evaluating teaching, the Student-led Teaching Awards are an important aspect of the student voice but not necessarily a major contribution to correctly identifying excellent teaching understood more holistically.

Professionalizing Academic Teachers: Teaching and Scholarship Track

Developments since the introduction of the Teaching and Scholarship Career pathway have enabled the University to improve the terms and conditions of staff who ensure that teaching delivery demands are met. These staff are an essential pillar of the effective educational functioning of the University. The dominant perception among those we interviewed is, however, that such staff are valuable but not valued. There is also still some lack of clarity concerning how a T&S academic should build their career. The diagram below offers an example of the central themes in the Teaching and Scholarship pathway to the professoriate:

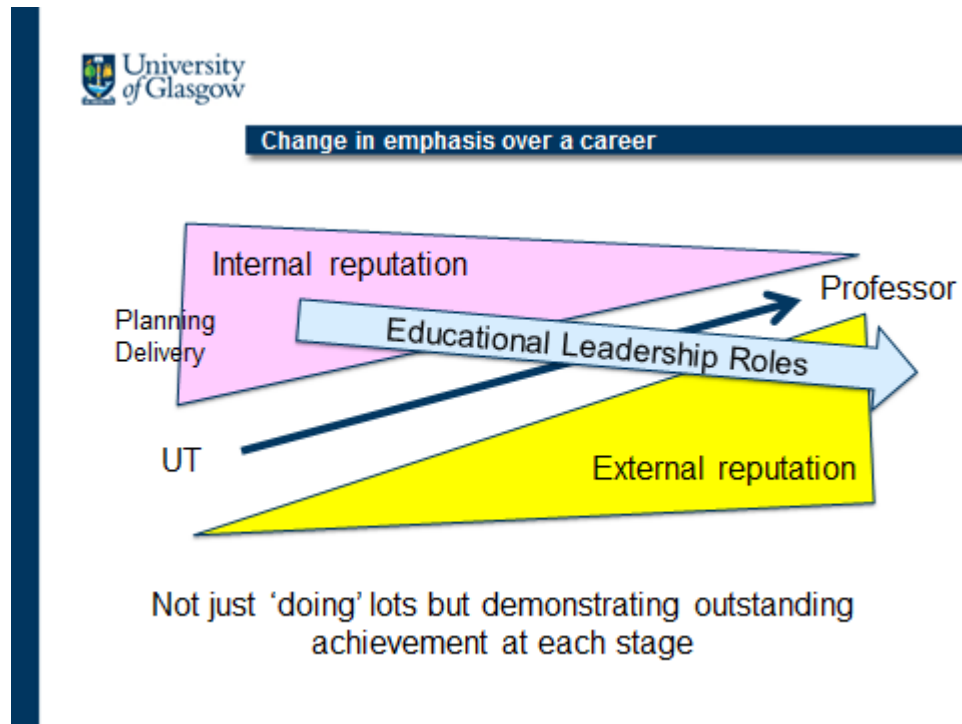
UT	SUT	Professor	
Internal focus			
Dynamic engagement in planning, delivery, assessment, admin & Teaching evaluations; SoTL – enhancement within institution PhDs	UT plus dynamic engagement; admin, management responsibilities; strategy, policy & working groups etc; PhDs; Educational Leadership and programme management	SUT plus significant educational leadership (eg University level strategy); All of that plus loads of	Where concerns are expressed in our interviews about the opportunities to fulfill the T&S pathway, they tend to focus around the Educational Leadership / management and External Profile elements (including access to funding).
External focus			
Knowledge exchange, impact, esteem; Funding;	+ external funding; + higher impact publishing/ outputs + Enhancement externally	international policy, national strategy, impact etc (External forms of educational leadership)	External recognition through the UK Professional Standards Framework
FHEA	SFHEA	On occasion this will align with PFHEA	

One of the most important messages to get over to staff on the T&S track is that professional development within their career involves a steady shift from internal teaching demands to internal teaching demands plus a growing, significant external profile in educational leadership and management at a national and international level. This is also a point that Heads of School/ subject area need to understand when developing appropriate work-plans for their T&S track staff. As outlined above, managerial problems can lead to a misguided sense that T&S track staff are essentially permanent adjunct teaching staff who fulfill, when necessary, a crisis management role in the face of increased student numbers at the same time as requests are being made to prevent increases in the teaching load of those on R&T tracks. A result of this situation would be to practically prevent T&S staff from accessing the opportunities required to progress. Such a scenario challenges the University's publically stated (HR website) commitment to be an employer focused on equality of opportunity for all staff.

The diagram below reiterates a key theme relating to the academic teacher track: over the period of an academic career the importance of a colleague's standing as a teacher changes as educational leadership, management and external esteem increasingly gains the staff member a mixed profile with a significant institutional impact and/or a reputation beyond

the institution. Unless their workload and career planning shifts accordingly, it is hard to see how T&S staff can progress through promotion.

Diagram: *From locally excellent deliverers of teaching to external educational leadership roles*



Such an emphasis operates in the R&T track slightly differently, as an R&T member of staff is expected to grow an international research profile in their discipline. Nonetheless, in the sense of the impact, range of responsibilities, and reach of an individual's reputation the comparability of the two career paths is clearest when viewed as a change in emphasis over time.

5. Recommendations suggested by interviewees for improving the status of teaching on campus

The academics we interviewed reflected at great length on ways in which teaching could be better recognized and rewarded. Below is a summary of the common suggestions for improvement:

- Diligent engagement with the collection and use of student feedback;
- Peer evaluation and evaluation from senior colleagues being part of the performance evidence base, with excellent teachers being encouraged to play a formal mentorship role as junior staff develop;
- Finding a way to recognise teaching excellence from the graduate attributes students have on leaving the university, as judged by their initial subsequent postgraduate destinations – this requires post-graduation engagement with employers;
- Finding ways to fairly assess scholarship activity across categories: pedagogical, applied, and discipline-specific. Some people are doing both scholarship and R&T-style research, both of which greatly enhance their teaching even if it is not REF returnable;
- Finding a context-oriented (i.e. dependent on College) but standardized way of measuring what the university means by teaching excellence;
- Improving how managers solve problems of workload and opportunity, to reflect the value of the T&S track;
- Rethinking the ways in which evidence is understood and collected in P&DR and promotions to better reflect the day-to-day experience of staff and their own career priorities and strengths;
- Enhanced recognition and visibility of the Professors of Learning & Teaching as leaders in teaching development.
- Continue to support student-led teaching awards as relevant to reward and recognition in P&DR, recognising that they are a distinct form of reward and recognition but valuable as part of a portfolio including other forms of evidence of teaching excellence.
- Consider not only the criteria within promotion but also the columns, headings and ‘weightings’. There is a perception that differences between the T&S and R&T tracks are significant in practice but this is not obvious from the presentation of the promotion applications and criteria.

6. Key Recommendation from the Project Team

The key point emerging from this project is the need for central guidance around teaching excellence and promotions to be explicitly reviewed and criteria established which are robust, achievable and acceptable across the Colleges. When this group started out, it hoped to achieve this. However, it is clear from the depth and range of issues thrown up in the interviews that the institution requires a centrally established working group that formally includes HR and College representation to take forward what is, in effect, a structural issue. This group, therefore, recommends that the VP Learning & Teaching establishes a short-life Working Group to revisit promotions criteria relating to teaching in both the T&S and the R&T tracks with a remit to undertake the following:

- Review and renew explicit criteria for promotions/ R&R pathways, ensuring that College-relevant, achievable criteria for excellence in teaching within a research-intensive environment are articulated and supported;
- Consider not only the criteria within promotion but also the columns, headings and 'weightings'. There is a perception that differences between the T&S and R&T tracks are significant in practice but this is not obvious from the presentation of the promotion applications and criteria.
- Draw together the best criteria from existing initiatives – including Teaching Excellence Awards, Student-led Teaching Awards, the elements of the various levels of the UKPSF as well as approaches taken to establish robust teaching criteria at the University of Cardiff & our U21 partners, University of British Columbia, Lund University - to develop a more effective structure for career development in which excellence in teaching (including the scholarship of learning and teaching) is demonstrably valued.
- In collaboration with Human Resources, develop College-level guidance for the support of reward and recognition of teaching throughout the academic career and in particular, to provide guidance for promotions committees and external referees considering these applications.
- Find ways of ensuring that funding opportunities to attend conferences/ CPD are established as a basis for T&S staff to meet their professional requirements in a manner commensurate with the R&T track approach to conference funding.
- Identify changes to address misperceptions concerning how the institution values teaching;
- Identify ways of recognising the collaborative endeavour of teaching across campus, providing support for this through reward systems. This is considered to be a particular issue for the current design of P&DR forms but potentially also promotion applications.
- Continue to support student-led teaching awards, recognising that they are a distinct form of reward and recognition but valuable as part of a portfolio including other forms of evidence of teaching excellence.

Appendix 1 Activities outlined as an action plan of change (in LTDF bid)

Activity 1:

Clarifying perceptions and practices relating to teaching criteria for reward and recognition across campus

1. Interviews with key staff within each of the Colleges. The team members are looking to extend from the ReTe project to undertake these interviews / focus groups relevant not just to level 10, but also to the other levels. They undertake this activity themselves. This LTDF bid requests funding for the transcription and analysis of the outcomes of these meetings.
2. Focus groups with academic staff: set of group discussions focused on realism of criteria, perceptions of interpretation of the criteria, and ways forward. These could be facilitated through offering the groups information on the UKPSF, the current criteria concerning teaching for all levels, the aims and objectives of *MAPCD* in relationship to support and development of teaching as well as an overview of professorial level understanding of criteria and implications for opportunities that need to be provided to meet these expectations. This will be especially needed to inform: the mentoring of academics across their careers and what activities and opportunities will need to be provided at different stages of the academic career if criteria are to be achievable.
3. Implementation of a cross-College short survey to identify values given to key categories of teaching excellence. This would include staff ranking of a range of criteria focusing on:
 - Perceptions of which criteria are considered the most/least influential/ weighty in terms of promotions decisions.
 - Perception of potential of other criteria (designed out of the information from the Teaching Excellence review and also the UKPSF).

Undertake a comparison of the outcomes of these 3 activities and identify mismatches. The aims of this comparison are to: identify ways to raise appropriate expectations on the part of staff applying for promotions; provide line managers and mentors with clear advice on the opportunities necessary for staff to meet established criteria; inform review of current criteria around teaching excellence.

Activity 2:

Student engagement

Additionally to this, the team wishes to employ 4 student interns to work on integrating student views on teaching excellence within academic systems to reward and recognise teaching excellence. The focus of the interns' work would be:

4. Comparison of key criteria of student excellence as identified in the Student-led teaching awards with the formalized criteria for teaching excellence within the institution's Teaching Excellence Awards and outcomes of criteria for teaching excellence generated through the Teaching Excellence literature review;
5. Fully structured interviews with students focused on their concepts of 'excellent', 'quality', and 'satisfactory' teaching, and how these can be converted into meaningful, robust student-driven criteria not dependent solely on popularity;
6. Interactive workshops with students in which they work on defining excellent teaching and feedback, identifying effective teaching methods and learning interventions, and setting out how they think teaching could be delivered. These sessions will be used to provide insight into how students articulate their desired and actual learning experiences as well as what they consider to be satisfactory in terms of feedback, opportunities for personal development and intellectually stimulating teaching.

Activity 3: *Revisiting formal teaching excellence criteria and identifying range of opportunities necessary to meet them*

Working with relevant individuals at a College and a central level to recraft, where necessary, appropriate teaching excellence criteria across the University, including Heads of School, Heads of College, Heads of College HR, and central HR.

Identifying where relevant opportunities are not currently provided/ available/factored into workload models at the various levels of the academic career levels with an aim to instituting (and by implication resourcing) them.

Activity 4: *Linking outcomes to the University's UKPSF CPD Framework*

Using the outcomes of these procedures to feed into the design of the University's UK Professional Standards (Teaching) Continuing Professional Development Framework, currently initiated within the Learning and Teaching Centre's Academic Development Unit. This will also assist in enabling the ADU to prioritise relevant forms of CPD support from within the Learning and Teaching Centre.

Activity 5: *Ensuring Sustainability*

The University of Glasgow is reconsidering how performance is reviewed and measured across all levels of the academic career path. This proposed team would report into the University career review group and inform developments around the diverse career tracks represented within the institution. As such, there would be immediate impact, and the HEA-led work could be incorporated into ongoing processes of P&DR, recruitment, development and career advancement. The LTDF project would also inform the development of the CPD Framework within the ADU.

Activity 6: *Evaluation*

By developing an embedded, institution-wide process, evaluation will occur through establishing measureable key performance indicators concerning teaching/ scholarship (To complement the KPIs the University of Glasgow currently has for research and the student experience).