

Transforming the recognition of university teaching: accelerating a global movement for change

Recent decades have seen growing calls for root-and-branch reform of the systems that underpin academic career advancement in universities worldwide. Specific concerns have often been raised about the marginalisation of academics' impact in teaching and learning during appointment and promotion processes. However, a remarkable shift is underway, as pioneering institutions rethink how they evaluate, support and reward academics' contribution to teaching and learning. The momentum for change has been accelerated as universities unite with national and global peers to drive cross-institutional reform to career pathways and promotion criteria.

This global movement has now reached a tipping point, with a critical mass of institutions engaged in ground-breaking initiatives to improve the support, evaluation and reward for university teaching and learning. The transformative policies and practices at these leading-edge universities hold the potential to be widely adopted and mainstreamed across the higher education sector.

The project is designed to inform and accelerate this global change effort. It has two central aims:

1. **Global mapping:** to map and integrate evidence that captures the scale and ambition of this growing movement for change. The output will be a global stocktake of progress towards transforming the evaluation, support and reward for excellence in university teaching and learning. The global assessment will highlight institutional, national and cross-national initiatives aimed at improving how universities recognise and reward teaching and learning.
2. **Best practice handbook:** to provide a handbook of global best practice that supports universities in their endeavours to improve the recognition and reward of teaching and learning. The output will be a practical 'how to guide' that focuses on the integral components and systems that work together to embed the effective reward of teaching and learning. This includes: (i) academic career pathways that offer flexible routes for progression; (ii) annual appraisal systems; (iii) professional development spanning all stages of the career ladder, from the undergraduate level through to educational leadership; and (iv) tools to evaluate and demonstrate impact in university teaching at both individual and collective levels. The handbook will draw on emerging and innovative practices worldwide, and present exemplars detailing how change can be designed and delivered.

The project will be conducted during the 2023/24 academic year by Dr Ruth Graham¹, a higher education consultant and lead for the Advancing Teaching initiative. It will draw on consultations with two global groups of stakeholders: (i) university leaders and researchers with specific interest in improving the reward of teaching and learning, who will be asked to identify highly-regarded exemplars from across the world; and (ii) stakeholders engaged in designing and delivering these highly-regarded change efforts at institutional, national and cross-national level, to explore the design of these new systems and the lessons learnt from their implementation.

The project outputs will be published as part of the Advancing Teaching² suite of resources, designed to improve the reward, recognition and evaluation of university teaching. It is supported and co-funded by a consortium of organisations and universities with a shared commitment to improving the evaluation and reward of university teaching. The project outputs will be made available as open access documents, with printed copies prepared for collaborators and those participating in the 2024 Advancing Teaching meeting.

¹ R H Graham Consulting: <https://www.rhgraham.org>

² Advancing Teaching: <https://www.advancingteaching.com>