

# Reward and recognition enhancement change programme 2012



An overview of the programme, participating institutions and case studies

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## Introduction, aims and purpose

Higher education providers face a range of challenges: changing financial bases, higher student expectations, and global competition. To go some way to meeting such challenges, universities need to ensure and demonstrate excellence in teaching and provide a high quality, distinctive, student learning experience.

The Reward and Recognition Enhancement (RARE) change programme focused on reviewing, developing and evaluating opportunities and strategic approaches to the reward and recognition of staff involved in teaching and the support of learning. It offered institutional teams the opportunity to:

- centre on an issue, or an identified strategic target area, within the area of reward and recognition of staff;
- explore and develop institutional policies, strategies and infrastructure for the reward and recognition of teaching;
- draw on the potential of the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF);
- involve students' views and perspectives on the recognition and reward of excellent teaching;
- build on existing and emerging research evidence through an internationally sourced evidence-base.

The programme consisted of the following key events:

- Start-up meeting – 22 February 2012
- Two-day residential – 27-28 March 2012
- Final meeting – 12 September 2012

## Participating institutions

The following institutions took part in the programme. The next section provides a summary of each team's initiative and a link to a case study where available. The case studies can also be viewed in the final section of this publication. Click on an institution name to jump to a summary.

- [De Montfort University](#)
- [Manchester Metropolitan University](#)
- [Oxford Brookes University](#)
- [University of Aberdeen](#)
- [University of Birmingham](#)
- [University of Cumbria](#)

## De Montfort University

### Academic Careers at De Montfort: Integrated Career Paths (ACaDeMIC Paths)

This project aims to create a credible career path structure that aligns to the new UKPSF and by so doing recognises teaching, learning and pedagogic research as equally valued and rewarded career paths at De Montfort University (DMU) and which can be evaluated using equivalent criteria up to national and international academic leadership as are currently applied in professorial promotions based upon research.

A key output of the project will be to provide a road-map of developments needed to align changing personal career development priorities of DMU staff with the university's strategic objectives, hence improving career satisfaction as well as university outputs.

The project team includes membership from the De Montfort Student Union, the Research Development Office and a National Teacher Fellow, thus ensuring all of the key voices are represented and lively debate will ensue.

The university will support the project sustainability through continued Executive Board support and the embedding of new processes via university committees and through comprehensive change management as part of a university wide improvement programme.

Through this project the DMU team will be in a strong position to propagate and compare project outputs with colleagues elsewhere in the sector, potentially setting a sector blueprint in this area.

Team leader – Nick Allsopp

Most universities have a range of measures in place to reward and recognise high quality contributions to learning, teaching and assessment (LTA). These arrangements, frequently developed through differing, often, piecemeal initiatives, might not form a coherent whole.. It is, therefore, difficult to take a view of their collective impact as part of an institutional change agenda. Until these arrangements are considered as a whole, it might be difficult to identify areas for improvement, extension and innovation relating to reward and recognition of LTA achievements.

RARE@MMU will take a holistic view of institutional arrangements for reward and recognition of LTA. It will map institutional effort to a model of the academic lifecycle - from appointment to mature success – and seek to identify inter-relationships and inter-dependencies within the model. From that starting point, the change programme will strive to develop a new iteration of MMU’s approach to the fostering of effective practice in LTA, in a manner appropriate to the demands of the operating context for HE institutions, and in a way that other institutions will find useful when considering their own arrangements.

The RARE@MMU change programme will also lead to the formulation of a coherent set of targets across a range of metrics that describe the staff development and human resources development challenge. These targets, taking the institution through to 2017, will form the drivers for change that will achieve a positive impact on the quality of teaching and the quality of the student experience across the whole of MMU.

Team leader – Robert Ready

## Oxford Brookes University

### Rewarding collective teaching / collectively rewarding teaching

The overall aim of our project is to strengthen our work on evaluating and rewarding team-based teaching quality enhancement.

At Oxford Brookes, we have long recognised and encouraged team-based approaches to teaching and exemplify this through our policies and practices. Our challenge now is to go beyond encouraging collective teaching, to ensuring that it is valued and rewarded, using rewards that are understood and valued. The Change Academy comes at a time when we welcome the opportunity to turn into actions our thinking thus far on:

- the evaluation of, and dialogue about, teaching quality enhancement within and beyond teams (as encouraged by our PETAL scheme)
- how to further develop our academic leadership at programme and departmental level for collective teaching
- implications for promotion criteria, to foster parity of esteem for teaching activities how the teaching fellowship scheme might be improved for
  - teaching teams (we have awarded teaching fellowships to two small teams in the past two years)
  - learning support colleagues (54 of the 58 awards made to date have been to academic staff)
- how we might best implement a 'programme of the year' award

We would therefore like to develop ways of rewarding teams through 'defining and developing criteria for recognising quality in teaching and quality in the student experience' (HE Academy/Genie, 2009) and for monitoring the impact of the new processes above.

Team leader – Frances Deepwell

The project is to develop and introduce a 360° Instrument, which will allow academic staff to receive feedback on their teaching quality and effectiveness from representatives of all major stakeholders in the learning environment.

We are developing a list of questions, cross referenced to the UK Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education 2011, which will be delivered as a simple and flexible web-based multisource feedback model for an academic's students, peers, line managers and self-reflection.

This holistic approach will enable staff to better understand the strengths and weaknesses of their teaching and provide a "metric" that could be the basis of recognising and rewarding teaching excellence.

The aim is to incorporate the instrument in the appraisal process and so help inform CPD and by upward feedback help the Institution to enhance the delivery of highly effective support and development of teaching.

By having a measure of teaching quality, there will be an evidence base for creating a "Teaching Academy" which will provide Institutional recognition of excellence. It also provides a mechanism to demonstrate further that an Institution takes teaching quality very seriously and can provide evidence of that excellence, an increasingly important consideration with the introduction of tuition fees.

Team leader – Mary Cotter

## University of Birmingham

### Valuing Teaching at Birmingham

The Valuing Teaching at Birmingham project aims to exploit our existing teaching excellence awards, funded project opportunities, institutional teaching fellowships and promotions opportunities to shape our future through leveraging a real culture change, where high quality teaching is celebrated and widely recognised as a valued and valuable academic activity.

It aims to do this by scoping and introducing a comprehensive, coherent suite of CPD opportunities for both new and established staff, with a view to enabling them not only to meet the challenges of providing effective learning opportunities on a day-to-day basis, but also to successfully apply for promotion on the basis of excellent teaching and supporting students' learning. The project is likely to include the design of a 'roadmap' for the introduction of an HEA accredited CPD framework to descriptor level 3 of the UK Professional Standards Framework, and will provide clarity and structure for staff considering their teaching activity and development during the recently revised Performance and Development Review scheme for academic staff.

- Depending on the outcomes of the 'explore' phase of the project, it is envisaged that the resulting CDP framework is likely to include elements such as:
- Tools and training to help academics and their managers recognise emergent and established expertise in teaching, and to plan individualised CPD activities to nurture and enhance this, with clear linkage to appropriate recognition and reward opportunities
- An enhanced suite of resources and facilitated development activities to meet the CPD needs identified

Team leader – [Corony Edwards](#)

[A case study of this initiative is available below – click here to jump to it](#)

## University of Cumbria

### A community approach to recognition, reward and enhancement of the student experience (CARRESE)

In order to create a vibrant and interdependent community of practitioners in teaching and the support of learning, our aim is to promote and foster a collaborative culture that appreciates and rewards mutual and reciprocal activities.

The aim of this proposed project is to create and implement a coherent institutional approach, building on and integrating our established practices and strengths in R&R, in this newly created, geographically distributed HEI. Our aspiration is to provide a mechanism to actively support retention of, and enthusiasm and energy within, an effective workforce, through recognising, valuing and rewarding their endeavours and successes in teaching and the support of learning.

The University of Cumbria CARRESE project will focus on the coaching of less experienced staff by those who are developing innovative and effective practices and are engaged in pedagogic research. It will comprise the sharing and modelling of evidence-based 'good practice' and practical support for context-specific adjustment, implementation and evaluation of others' practice. The resulting mutual benefits include opportunity for leadership by the more experienced staff member, capacity building in the novice staff member, and overall enhancement of student learning experiences.

Project outputs to be shared in the sector include:

- a model of how to develop a community approach to rewarding and recognising teaching and support of student learning
- an account of how staff data informs the approach/strategy
- clarity on how the student voice is used to inform the approach/strategy
- an outline plan of ways to measure cultural embeddedness

Team leader – Melissa Shaw

# Case study

## Valuing Teaching at Birmingham (VT@B)

University of Birmingham

### Overview

Over the last decade the University has introduced various schemes to recognise and reward our best teachers, most recently through an updated promotions framework that for the first time allows academics to opt for a teaching focused career pathway to the highest professorial level. To date, however, only a small minority of academic staff have regularly engaged with such schemes, with the majority believing (and hence perpetuating the reality) that the prevailing culture values research activity far above teaching. Potentially good teachers focus their energies on generating research income and outputs, and outstanding teachers feel undervalued and often overlooked, if not for promotion, then in terms of the esteem of their colleagues. There is urgent need for the systematic, proactive encouragement of academic staff to participate in the development, recognition and reward opportunities now available, if our formal schemes are to have a significant impact in contributing to the University's aim to provide all our students with a world-class academic experience

### Aims and objectives

The principal aim of the project is to explore staff perceptions and realities of how teaching is valued at Birmingham together with a review of existing academic practice development provision.

This will enable through the analysis of the data to produce a comprehensive report for the University senior management team that will enable them to make key strategic decisions on the learning and teaching provision. Likely outcomes of this report will include the recommendation to adopt a continuous professional development approach which will enhance both development of academic staff, together with more streamlined and focused promotion process and linking into the HEA strategic framework, particularly for senior and principal fellow status.

### Approach and activities

Most of the data gathering consisted of in-depth one-to-one interview with academic staff from across the university. 37 staff were interviewed which allowed a 'diagonal stripe' from the colleges and schools as well as from seniority and promotion status. This qualitative data is in the process of being analysed, indeed so successful were the interviews that more material was produced than was initially envisaged and so has taken longer to analyse. Data has also been drawn from the various teaching enhancement and promotion process within the university.

### Outcomes

The report is now at a working draft and has been circulated to Heads of School and Heads of Education through a series of workshops and their feedback and observation fed into the next iterations of the report. An external consultant to the project Professor Michael Bradford has assisted with presenting the project to the senior board members at the university and this feedback also fed into the report.

### Impact

As yet none and this is in line with the project outcomes. The main aim and objective of the project was to 'find out' and then 'report' together with a series of recommendations. It will be at this stage that the subsequent projects will have meaningful impact

## **Lessons learned**

The level of interest that a project like this can develop and subsequently the amount of data that it generates

## **Next steps**

The report will be presented to project board on 6th December 2012 after which it is anticipated that it will progress through the education committee and finally through to the university executive board and that all or some of the recommendations will be adopted.

## **Key messages**

A project such as this generates strong responses from staff (almost a 'flood gate' opening) and as such generates a significant amount of qualitative data. The key message for the project is simply the amount of time needed to process such responses. The key message for the university is not clear yet, in that the data, whilst mostly analysed, is showing a strength of feeling about how teaching is valued within the institution, exactly what that means and how it relates to recommendations has yet to be ascertained.

- Do not underestimate the amount of resource required to analyse qualitative data, especially when the subject of the project strikes a chord with staff.
- That the project needs to manage expectations, it ask about issues that a close to peoples' hearts, just because you are asking does not indicate a change.

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