



Higher Education  
**Academy**

TRANSFORMING TEACHING  
INSPIRING LEARNING



# Teaching Excellence Framework

13 January 2016, PHEE Annual Conference 2016

Professor Sean Ryan

Head of STEM, Higher Education Academy

[Sean.Ryan@heacademy.ac.uk](mailto:Sean.Ryan@heacademy.ac.uk)

<https://uk.linkedin.com/in/profseangryan>

# The Teaching Excellence Framework

## Genesis

### > Dearing Report (1997)<sup>1</sup> “*Higher Education in the Learning Society*”

Recommendations:

13 ... develop or seek access to programmes for teacher training of their staff, ... accreditation of such programmes from the [ILTHE].

48 ... new full-time academic staff with teaching responsibilities are required to achieve at least associate membership of the [ILTHE].

### > Charles Clarke (2003) White Paper<sup>2</sup> “*The Future of Higher Education*”

Effective teaching and learning is essential ...  
**High quality teaching must be recognised and rewarded**, and best practice shared...

Centres of Excellence to reward good teaching and promote best practice;

Better information for students ... **to help student choice drive up quality**;

New national professional standards for teaching and a new national body ... [HEA].

1. Snr civil servant & Chancellor, U. Nottingham, 1993-2000;  
<http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/dearing1997/dearing1997.html>

2. Secretary of State for Education and Skills;  
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20040117001247/dfes.gov.uk/highereducation/hestrategy/>

# The Teaching Excellence Framework

2015

> Jo Johnson, (Jul. 2015)<sup>1</sup> speech:  
“*Teaching at the heart of the system*”

“... drive good teaching up so that it becomes excellent and to root out bad teaching ...”

“... value for money both for students ... and taxpayers ...”

“... to include a clear set of outcome-focused criteria and metrics ...”

## Responses<sup>2</sup>:

> Nicola Dandridge, Chief Executive, UUK  
“The challenge is how to construct a single Framework that can effectively respond to that tremendous [student] diversity.”

> Joy Carter, VC, U. Winchester & Chair, GuildHE:  
“UK universities are so strong partly because they are so diverse. “

> Wendy Piatt, Director General, Russell Group:  
“... universities use a wide range of measures to help us ensure the quality of undergraduate teaching ...

to instil both independence and rigour of thought and learning, producing capable, self-motivated graduates of the highest standard who succeed in a global employment market.”

1. Minister of State for Universities and Science  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/teaching-at-the-heart-of-the-system>

2.  
<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/jo-johnson-unveils-teaching-ref-plans>

# The Teaching Excellence Framework

## TEF consultation (in England)

> Sajid Javid, (Nov. 2015)<sup>1</sup> Green Paper  
“*Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*” (105 pp)

4 ... higher education system must continue to evolve. Students who now fund more of the cost of their higher education demand higher quality, transparency and value for money. Employers want highly skilled graduates who are ready to enter the workforce. And the country needs people with the knowledge and expertise to help us compete at a global level.

12 ... most league tables do not include a measure of teaching quality ... not always an accurate reflection of the quality of education ...

13 ... priorities ... ‘having more hours of teaching’, ‘reducing the size of teaching groups’, ‘better training for lecturers’ and ‘providing better learning facilities’ ...

21 ... (TEF) aims to recognise and reward high quality teaching. Prospective students will be able to use the TEF results to help inform their decisions about which institution to attend, and employers can consider it in their recruitment ...

1. Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/474227/BIS-15-623-fulfilling-our-potential-teaching-excellence-social-mobility-and-student-choice.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/474227/BIS-15-623-fulfilling-our-potential-teaching-excellence-social-mobility-and-student-choice.pdf)

# The Teaching Excellence Framework

## TEF consultation (in England)

- > *Part A: Teaching Excellence, Quality and Social Mobility*
- > A1/15... no one broadly accepted definition of “teaching excellence”. In practice it has many interpretations and there are likely to be different ways of measuring it. [1]
  - excellence must incorporate and reflect the diversity of the sector, disciplines and missions...
  - excellence is the sum of many factors – ... metrics [are] not the whole picture; [4,5]

Excellence more likely to be identified at microscale (academic[UKPSF]/module/programme/department), but harder at mesoscale (HEI) and macroscale (sector nationally/internationally)<sup>2,3</sup>

2. Ray Land & George Gordon, 2015, HEA, “Teaching excellence initiatives: modalities and operational factors”

[https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/resources/teaching\\_excellence\\_initiatives\\_report\\_land\\_gordon.pdf](https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/resources/teaching_excellence_initiatives_report_land_gordon.pdf)

3. Joëlle Fanghanel et al. 2015, HEA, “Defining and supporting the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL): A sector-wide study”

<https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/sotl-executive-summary.pdf>

4. Graham Gibbs, 2010, HEA, “Dimensions of Quality”

[https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/dimensions\\_of\\_quality.pdf](https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/dimensions_of_quality.pdf)

5. HEA blog, 2015, “The HEA’s proposed ‘case for excellence’ approach for TEF”

<https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/blog/hea%E2%80%99s-proposed-%E2%80%98case-excellence%E2%80%99-approach-tef#sthash.K4jO3K6r.dpuF>

1. Jack Grove 2015, THE, 23/7/15 “How might a teaching excellence framework be built?”

<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/features/teaching-excellence-framework-tef-how-might-it-be-built>

# The Teaching Excellence Framework

## The proposed TEF model: a summary

- > A1/23: criteria and metrics will develop over time;
- > A1/26: In year one ... level 1 TEF award if it has a current, successful Quality Assessment (QA) review and ... would last for up to three years.
- > A1/31. In year two, we will award higher levels of TEF... (for example levels 2 to 4), ... would last for up to three years ...
- > A1/32. A technical consultation ... in 2016 which will cover the operational detail of metrics and of the assessment criteria, process and outcomes ...
- > A1/35. ... expect that the QA process and higher levels of the TEF will use the same metrics and indicators wherever possible. We envisage incorporating new common metrics, ... once they are sufficiently robust ...
- > A1/38-40: ... use of the Grade Point Average (GPA) system ... will not be a pre-requisite
- > A2/2: ... ensure that providers applying for TEF ... are fulfilling widening participation expectations ...
- > A2/3: ... observes the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)'s ... guidance
- > A2/5: ... develops towards a 5 yearly award ...
- > A2/6: ... rolling cycle of TEF assessments (as for current QA reviews) as opposed to a periodic review (... as with the REF).
- > A2/9. ... TEF judgements will be made by a panel of ... academic experts in learning and teaching, student representatives, and employer/professional representatives. ... convened for each discipline (subject) ...

# The Teaching Excellence Framework

## Chapter 3: Criteria and Metrics

- > A3/2: ... no single direct measure of teaching excellence, we will need to rely on proxy information ... developed over time ... for example HMRC matched data ... on graduate outcomes.
  - > A3/3: ... metrics alone will not give a full picture of excellence, ... institutions to supplement them with additional information. This consultation is not prescriptive about the metrics ...
  - > A3/4: ...metrics ... broken down and reported by disadvantaged backgrounds and under-represented groups ...
  - > A3/5: ... key aspects that need to be considered to recognise the complexity and breadth of teaching quality and excellence... :  
teaching quality;  
learning environment;  
student outcomes and learning gain.
- REF:**  
Output quality  
Environment  
Impact
- > A3/7: Teaching Quality:  
contact ... stimulation ... student effort ... developing their knowledge, skills and career readiness ... satisfied ... understanding the ways in which students are intellectually challenged and engaged
  - > A3/8: Learning Environment:  
wider context ... resources ... ability to study and research independently ... leadership ... T&L strategy ... recognises and rewards excellent teaching ... career path and other rewards ... mutual benefits between teaching, scholarship and research
  - > A3/9: Student outcomes and learning gain:  
educational and employment outcomes ... students from different backgrounds ... knowledge, skills and career readiness ... achieve their educational and professional goals ... added value from their studies
- N.B. OECD AHELO<sup>1</sup> project failed to gain traction in 2015
- > A3/12-17: DLHE, HMRC, HESA, NSS, institutional evidence, UKES?



# The Teaching Excellence Framework

## Other matters in the Green Paper

- > *Part C: Simplifying the higher education architecture*
- > C1/9. The Office for Students (OfS) ... to promote the student interest, with ... responsibility for:
  - i) operating the entry gateway;
  - ii) assuring baseline quality;
  - iii) running the TEF;
  - iv) collecting and providing information;
  - v) widening access and success for disadvantaged students;
  - vi) allocating grant funding (...);
  - vii) ensuring student protection;
  - viii) promoting the student interest;
  - ix) ensuring value for money for students and the taxpayer; and,
  - x) assuring financial sustainability, management and good governance. ...
- > *Annex A: Equality analysis*
- > 18. We expect to see:
  - > ... institutions and courses that do best within the TEF framework attract more student applications and, through their greater ability to raise fees, reinvest in the quality of their teaching and grow their capacity ...;
  - > ... changes in provider behaviour driven by TEF. ... institutions that receive a lower assessment either seek to raise their teaching standards ... ; or differentiate themselves as a lower cost or specialist provider ... bring diversity to the sector; remove variability in the standard of provision at discipline level; or ... withdraw.

# The Teaching Excellence Framework

## Drivers

- > TEF to inform student choices
- > student choices to drive up quality
- > Improving information and teaching excellence, to satisfaction of students and employers/UK plc.

## Constraints

- > no single best approach to teaching excellence, i.e. diversity of provision is valued
- > Equality of opportunity for students (diverse backgrounds) valued
- > no single adequate metric

## Challenges

- > Unintended consequences e.g. assumes student choices drive *up* quality, i.e. fee choices<sup>1</sup> don't drive parts of sector into race to the bottom
- > Identifying adequate metrics of teaching excellence<sup>2,3</sup>
  - NSS & edutainment<sup>4</sup> ≠ teaching excellence
  - HRMC tax revenue ≠ teaching excellence
- > Achieve light touch/VFM

1. Graham Gibbs, 2012, "Implications of 'Dimensions of quality' in a market environment"

[https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/resources/hea\\_dimensions\\_of\\_quality\\_2.pdf](https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/resources/hea_dimensions_of_quality_2.pdf)

2. Graham Gibbs, 2010, "Dimensions of Quality"  
[https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/dimensions\\_of\\_quality.pdf](https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/dimensions_of_quality.pdf)

3. HEA 2015, blog, What does Dimensions of Quality tell us that can inform the Teaching Excellence Framework?

<https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/blog/what-does-dimensions-quality-tell-us-can-inform-teaching-excellence-framework#sthash.ibEEshRX.dpuf>

4. Sarah Cunnane 2010, THE, 15/7/15 "Recipe for a firm student favourite"

<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/recipe-for-a-firm-student-favourite/412542.article>



Higher Education  
**Academy**

TRANSFORMING TEACHING  
INSPIRING LEARNING

# The HEA 2016

- > Owned by the academy, not a regulatory arm of Government/QAA/HEFCE
  - > Focussed on improving student learning by raising the quality and status of teaching in HE
  - > Responsive to the variety of needs across four discipline strands:
    - Arts & Humanities
    - Social Sciences
    - Health and Social Care
    - STEM
  - > Within each strand, subject differences recognised and supported
- > HEA leads teaching excellence through:
    - Undertaking student surveys<sup>1</sup> for the academy, and feedback to academics
    - CPD provision at key career points, e.g. New to Teaching; Growing your Skills; best-practice networks, e.g. VC WG; conferences & events; resources & pedagogical advice
    - Rigorous Accreditation and Recognition scheme via the HEA's Fellowship Programme<sup>2</sup> underpinned by its Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF)
    - Bespoke consultancy on L&T
    - BIS expert and advisory groups

1. UKES: United Kingdom Engagement Survey  
PTES: Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey  
PRES: Postgraduate Research Experience Survey

2. AFHEA: Associate Fellow of the HEA (~13000)  
FHEA: Fellow of the HEA (~53000)  
S/PFHEA: Senior/Principal Fellow of the HEA (~4000)