

**Title:** Students awarding great teachers

**Presenters:** Pam Parker, Sally Bradley, Ian Scott and Gary Pavlechko  
City University London, Sheffield Hallam University,  
Worcester University and Ball State University, Indiana.

### **Abstract:**

#### **Session Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this session, delegates will be able to:

- Discuss student nominated award schemes in three Universities
- Outline some of challenges to introducing such a scheme
- Compare and contrast the approaches used in these schemes
- Share experiences of such schemes within delegates institutions

#### **Session Outline**

Key issues to be addressed are:

Since the 1990s there has been a focus on raising the profile of teaching to match that of research. Teaching awards have been introduced in the UK and beyond as one approach to valuing excellent teaching (Chalmers 2011, Jackson 2006, Skelton 2004). Skelton (2004) and Palmer and Collins (2006) identified from their research in this area that some of the characteristics of teaching excellence include being a reflective practitioner, actively engaging students in their learning and being enthusiastic and approachable.

Whilst the number of schemes has increased over the years the awards tend to be decided by senior staff or peers not by those who are the recipients of the teaching. However, recently UK Universities have started to introduce student nominated awards. Their importance is recognised by the continued support provided by NUS Scotland and HEA (2011) in the Student Led Teaching Awards (STLA). Given the importance of the student experience within all Universities vision statements and the increased emphasis as fees rise it is essential that those who experience the teaching first hand can participate in the decision about who gains awards and what factors should be taken into account. There is a range of literature about student engagement in University activities (Trowler 2010) but there is little published peer review literature on student nominated awards or the influence that they have.

The four presenters all have schemes running in their Universities that have been introduced at different times and have used different approaches. The presenters each faced a range of challenges when introducing their scheme and these will be discussed along with the opportunities they offered. The journey of each institutions scheme will be outlined with an exposition of the similarities, differences and impact of the schemes on learning and teaching.

The delegates will be able to share the schemes from their own institutions and discuss their utility, their unintended consequences and how that can be used to develop and enhance pedagogic practice.

### **Session Activities and Approximate Timings**

5 minutes	Brief introduction to presenters and delegates and outline of session
20 minutes	Each presenter will spend 5 minutes outlining the scheme in their institution
25 minutes	The participants will be divided into groups and where possible (dependent upon numbers) each group will explore a different question/issue <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What do you think the challenges and opportunities of introducing such a scheme might be and how could these be approached?</li><li>• Who would you involve in such as scheme and what criteria might you wish to use?</li><li>• What would you provide as the recognition of this award and how will you share good practice from this?</li></ul>
30 minutes	In a plenary group share what each group developed
10 minutes	The presenters will outline any future changes they plan for their schemes and time for further questions.

### **References**

Chalmers D (2011) Progress and challenges to the recognition and reward of the scholarship of Teaching in higher education *Higher Education Research & Development* Vol.30 (1) p25-38

Jackson M (2006) Great classroom teaching and more: Awards for outstanding teaching evaluated *International Journal of Educational Management* Vol.20 (4) p261-278

NUS Scotland and HEA (2011) Student Led Teaching Awards. Available from <http://www.studentledteachingawards.org.uk/>, last accessed 4 March 2012

Palmer A & Collins R (2006) Perceptions of rewarding excellence in teaching: motivation and the Scholarship of teaching *Journal of Further and Higher Education* Vol 30, (2) pp193-205

Skelton A (2004) Understanding 'teaching excellence' in higher education: a critical evaluation of the National Teaching Fellowships Scheme *Studies in Higher Education* Vol 29 (4) pp451 - 468

Trowler V (2010) *Student Engagement Literature Review* Higher Education Academy York