

Title: **Enabling teaching excellence**

Presenter: **Angela Benzies**
Edinburgh Napier University

Abstract:

Session Learning Outcomes

During this session, delegates will be able to:

1. Explore the opportunities and obstacles related to recognition and reward of teaching excellence;
2. Discuss the place of a Teaching Fellowship Scheme as a means to recognise, reward and promote excellence in teaching;
3. Develop effective ways to foster academic leadership and peer support;
4. Share ideas for developing, coordinating and evaluating activities related to the promotion of teaching excellence, through a Teaching Fellowship Scheme or other means.

Session Outline

The proposed session will facilitate discussion of the benefits and opportunities related to the recognition and promotion of teaching excellence. While the session will be centred around a case study on the Edinburgh Napier Teaching Fellowship Scheme, the activities will encourage participants to examine the possibilities in their own institutions and to develop a plan for the enhancement of teaching excellence. The nature of the academic leadership role in enabling excellence will be examined along with analysis and evaluation of the methods used at Edinburgh Napier for fostering these skills and for the coordination of learning, teaching and development work across the institution. Drawing on the expertise of workshop participants, the group will look at effective ways to capture, share and use individual expertise and outcomes of LTA project work to maximise impact and return on investment. There will also be the opportunity to consider criteria for excellence and other aspects of a teaching Fellowship Scheme against current professional recognition schemes, and to evaluate the options for use of the SEDA Professional Development Framework to accredit the work of Teaching Fellows.

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

1. **Introduction** – 5 mins (presenter)
2. **Ice breaker – definitions of teaching excellence** - 10 mins (group activity). Each group will be asked to create a set of bullet points that will define how they would measure teaching excellence in an HE context.

3. **Key characteristics of the Edinburgh Napier Teaching Fellowship Scheme** - 20 mins (presenter). The presenter will introduce the Edinburgh Napier's Scheme, followed by the showing of a 9 minute DVD, after which delegates will be invited to review the lists produced in activity 1, compare these to the Edinburgh Napier Scheme approach and draw consider different approaches to recognition of teaching excellence.
4. **Institutional perspectives on valuing and promoting teaching excellence** – 10 mins (group activity). Drawing upon the previous activities and looking at a range of possible institutional perspectives supplied, delegates will be asked to identify opportunities and challenges in recognising and promoting excellence.
5. **Strategies for enabling enhancement through academic leadership** (presenter 10 mins, group 15 mins). The role of grant aided project work and Special Interest Groups will be discussed by the presenter and groups will consider other strategies, including use of selected SEDA PDF awards as an enabler.
6. **Effective coordination and maximisation of impact of teaching enhancement activities** (presenter 5 mins, group 10 mins). Lessons learnt from the development of Edinburgh Napier's Scheme and its new LTA Strategy will be discussed, each group will draft an outline action plan and then report on its key characteristics.
7. **Conclusions** (5 mins)

References

Benzies, A (2009) Promoting Excellence in Teaching and Learning through an Institutional Teaching Fellowship Scheme. *Practice and Evidence of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* Vol 4, No 1.

Saint-Onge, H. & Wallace, D. (2003). *Leveraging Communities of Practice for Strategic Advantage*. Burlington, USA: Butterworth-Heinemann.

SEDA Professional Development Framework. Available at: <http://www.seda.ac.uk/pdf.html>

Skelton, A. (2005). *Understanding Excellence in Higher Education: Towards a Critical Approach*. Abingdon, England: Routledge.

Wenger, E. (2002). *Cultivating Communities of Practice*. Massachusetts, USA: Harvard Business School Publishing.