

Title: **Engaging staff with the TEF metrics at subject level**

Presenter: **Paul Yates**
Newman University

Session Learning Outcomes

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

- interpret data related to the core TEF metrics from one or more staff perspectives;
- empathise with staff who receive data on metrics in various formats;
- suggest key interventions based on data in the TEF core metrics.

Session Outline

Institutions have been invited to take part in the subject pilot of the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) in 2018. This will see an extension of the use of the metrics that were used in TEF2 in 2017, but no fundamental change to the core metrics used. There is considerable debate about the authenticity of these metrics (Brown, 2017), although Ashwin (2017) notes that they do have a certain logic despite not directly measuring the quality of teaching. It is, however, clear that the government regards the metrics as “a non-negotiable element of the TEF” (Wilsdon, 2017). The philosophy behind this workshop is, therefore, how to make the best use of the TEF metrics to enhance the student experience at the subject level.

The approach at Newman University has been to produce a series of subject level score cards. These indicate performance in each metric compared with that of the whole University, and each metric is colour coded in one of four ways depending on the relative difference. The intention is that the Academic Practice Unit, and other support departments, can work with subjects to address any issues identified and to share best practice.

The workshop will include a discussion of how the score cards have been used by subjects at Newman. As part of the Annual Enhancement Round Report subjects are asked to identify their specific academic priorities for the coming year. This year they have been asked to include actions to improve performance in these aspects of provision where there are red flags on their subject TEF scorecards. The exercise also provides the opportunity to discuss items of good or innovative practice and here a number of green flags on the scorecards are mentioned. As well as the written report, heads of subjects make a verbal report during the autumn semester; this gives an indication of progress made since the report and how the student experience has been impacted.

This workshop will explore ways in which this information can be presented, how different stakeholders might react to different information sets, and what actions could be supported from an educational development perspective. Fictional sets of data will be used, presented in a variety of formats which make different use of colour and statistical data. Delegates will be invited to respond to these from the perspective of different stakeholders, and then to explore what interventions might be appropriate from an educational development perspective.

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

- Introduction to subject level TEF, implementation at Newman University, and workshop activity *5 minutes*
- Discussion of simulated score cards from a specified stakeholder perspective *10 minutes*
- Outline of how the score cards have been used in practice *10 minutes*
- Consideration of score cards in different formats *5 minutes*
- Feedback in plenary *10 minutes*
- Summary of discussion *5 minutes*

The session will be evaluated by self-reflection and informal discussion with delegates during the remaining conference time after the workshop.

References

Ashwin, P.W.H., 2017. Making sense of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) results.

Brown, S., 2017. Recognising and Rewarding Teaching Excellence: an argument for authentic metrics. *Compass: Journal of Learning and Teaching*, 10(2).

Wilsdon, J., 2017. Responsible metrics. *Higher Education Strategy and Planning: A Professional Guide*, p.247.