

**Title:** **Defining High Quality Teaching: perceptions of students and academics**

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### **Session Learning Outcomes**

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

- Review their criteria for defining high quality teaching
- Consider how our methodology could be applied within their own settings
- Understand the SADRAS scheme at Kingston which enables staff and students to work on research projects in partnership

### **Session Outline**

Higher education appears driven by a thirst for metrics as the sector decides on those most appropriate for measuring the quality of teaching. However, there can be issues and variations with using metrics as a measure of teaching quality including in their interpretation. Overall, there needs to be an understanding of how what is being measured is perceived between different groups of students and academics in order to bring closer alignment in expectations. The introduction of tuition fees and concomitant removal of public funding has focussed attention on the competitive nature of teaching quality. It has also shifted the onus of determining what good teaching looks like from practitioners to students. Originally, the Teaching Quality Assessment (TQA) was employed in determining a quality teaching score, this has now moved to student evaluation through the National Student Survey (NSS) with these scores being used to feed into the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) results. This focuses attention on student perceptions of the quality of teaching and what this means for their overall student experience. Although there is much literature attempting to define high quality teaching from an academics' perspective, there is less to show how these definitions compare and align directly with those perceived by students. (Strang et al, 2016)

Influenced by work undertaken as a collaborative project a decade ago (Bond et al, 2006), this session will discuss the findings of a project which has been developed and delivered in partnership between staff and students as part of the SADRAS scheme at Kingston University to explore and compare perceptions of how high quality teaching is defined between

academics and different groups of students. The SADRAS scheme (Student Academic Development Research Associate Scheme) enables undergraduate students and staff to work in partnership in the design and implementation of research focused on enhancing the academic experience of undergraduate students and collaborative research experience of KU staff. Undergraduates taking part in the scheme undertake paid research in an academic environment, whilst also having an opportunity to make a positive change to the learning experience at Kingston. The outcomes from this SADRAS project are providing a more in-depth understanding of our students' perceptions of high quality teaching and are being used to inform Kingston's teaching observation scheme.

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

The outline of the workshop is as follows;

10 minutes – overview of the project including:

- how the SADRAS scheme works at Kingston / working in partnership with students
- stimulus for the research and key points to address for our institution

20 minutes – through a dialogue sheet activity (in small groups if numbers permit, otherwise in one group) we will:

- share some of the data gathered during the project
- discuss emerging criteria for defining high quality teaching
- invite comparisons / similarities with other institutions

15 minutes – plenary:

- what did the SADRAS researchers (staff and students working in partnership) learn from the project / impact on our institution
- what have conference delegates learnt from the dialogue sheet activity and what questions remain
- scope for further development /collaboration

### **References**

Bond, C., Burden, P., Hall, J (2006) Defining Excellence in Teaching and Learning. *Educational Developments* 7.2: 8-11

Strang, L, Belanger, J., Manville, C. & Meads, C. (2016) *Review of the research literature on defining and demonstrating quality teaching and impact in higher education*. York: Higher Education Academy

[https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/resources/defining\\_and\\_demonstrating\\_teaching\\_quality\\_and\\_impact.pdf](https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/resources/defining_and_demonstrating_teaching_quality_and_impact.pdf)