

Title: Professional recognition and scholarship: what's the evidence?

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Session Learning Outcomes

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

- Identify ways in which professional recognition can promote engagement with scholarship of teaching and learning
- Recognise and gauge the role of dialogic approaches to foster cultural change in SoTL
- Recognise and gauge the wider implications for individual and institutional scholarship through professional recognition

Session Outline

Ulster University has operated its HEA-accredited Professional Development and Recognition Scheme (PDRS) since 2012, providing support and professional recognition at all descriptors of the UKPSF. Within the PDRS, open to all staff who support teaching and learning, the assessment of professional recognition takes place through scrutiny of submitted evidence (e-portfolio), followed by an Assessed Professional Conversation (APC) carried out by a trained PDRS assessor. Professional conversations are seen as “one of the most powerful approaches...to promote teacher learning” (Danielson, 2009) allowing the individual to legitimately engage in “reflective critique” (Kreber, 2013) where personal and social constructs may be expressed in appropriate language, as part of a focused narrative which is evidence-based. All submissions are thus predicated on an scholarly evidence base drawn from individual practice. Over the course of the scheme thus far our evaluation has noted that many participants have not previously actively engaged in the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) and consequently find it difficult or challenging to situate and/or articulate their practice within an appropriate scholarly framework (Brew, 2007; MacKenzie *et al*, 2010) in order to generate the evidence of effective practice required.

This paper outlines the measures devised by the PDRS, in particular through dialogic engagement and an emphasis on the value of broader collegial discourse on teaching (Spiller, 2002; Clark, 2001), to support applicants in identifying and engaging with scholarship to strengthen their evidence base for professional recognition.

The paper will also examine findings from the evaluation relating to the attitudinal shift towards scholarship within practice, and consider the transformational implications for individual and institutional scholarship going forward, where the brokerage of new professional relationships is beginning to transcend the more usual “significant networks” (Roxå & Mårtensson, 2009) or trusted communities of practice.

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

The outline of the workshop is as follows;

- Overview of scheme and initial findings (10 minutes)
- Group activity: *Measuring the width or feeling the quality?* (based on extracts from evaluation data) (10 minutes)
- Passive to active scholarship: individuals and communities of practice – what's the role of academic developers (10 minutes)
- Round up of findings (5 minutes)
- Q&A (10 minutes)

References

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Roxå, T. and Mårtensson, K. (2009) Significant conversations and significant networks – exploring the backstage of the teaching arena, *Studies in Higher Education*, 34 (5), 547-559.

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