

# Pipe dream or reality? Rewarding and recognizing teaching in Australian higher education

**Denise Chalmers**

University of Western Australia, Crawley, Australia  
denise.chalmers@uwa.edu.au

Reward and recognition of teaching has been elusive, whether for a research-teaching academic role, a teaching focused or a contract teaching role. Despite over 25 years of intent to better reward and recognize teaching, policy makers, university leaders and teachers all agree that research achievements continue to be rewarded over teaching in terms of promotion, salary and prestige. Is the goal to reward and recognize teaching in HE a perpetual pipe dream, is it a possibility in the near future or is it already a reality?

While research excellence has been identified as providing prestige, job satisfaction, and career advancement, teaching excellence has been seen as career limiting with few prospects for promotion, job satisfaction and prestige. With increasing numbers of appointments being made to teaching focused roles, and limited term teaching contracts in HE institutions (Probert, 2013), is the stated intent of institutions to create pathways and raise the prestige and career opportunities for teachers in these roles, as well as better recognizing the teaching of those in more traditional roles just rhetoric, given little has changed in the past 25 years, dating from Boyer (1990)?

Many universities and HE institutions in recent years have been clarifying their policies, criteria and expectations for promotion, and performance review. A few have implemented a comprehensive program to prepare the supervisors and promotion committees to enact the policy and review against the criteria. Many have not, trusting that the committees and supervisors are fully appraised, supportive of the changes and competent in making informed judgments that fully take account of the new criteria, evidence to support the claims and for different types of roles.

Probert (2015) argues that a higher priority has been placed on carrying out individual performance review at the expense of instituting a whole of institution, planned and coherent approach, that includes disciplinary and departmental engagement to address teaching quality and its recognition and reward. Blackmore and Kandiko (2011), Chalmers (2007) and Probert (2015) have argued that unless departments and disciplines engage fully in the issue of teaching quality, national and institutional initiatives to enhance the status of teaching will continue to flounder.

## References

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