DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC E-PORTFOLIOS TO ENHANCE VISIBILITY AND IMPACT OF TEACHING-FOCUSED ACADEMICS

Michelle Picard
The ‘Problem’ of Quality Teaching for Institutions

- Institutions demonstrate standards in teaching including course design; staffing and learning resources/educational support (Australian Higher Education Standards, 2015)

- Fewer resources, less funding more pressure on teaching-focussed academics to provide the course design, learning resources and support through individual expertise
The ‘Problem’ of Quality Teaching for HE Teachers

• Teaching focussed academics lack status (sessional appointments, contingent contracts, lower levels of appointments) & processes for career development (Bentley et al, 2014; Probert, 2013).

• Need for ‘explicit promotions criteria which do not simply rely on measures of student satisfaction (Probert, 2013, p32).

• Need for staff development that acknowledges/rewards expertise (disciplinary academic & professional knowledge, teaching), but is rigorous and meaningful.
Arguments for Standards for HE Teachers

• Make explicit elements of high quality teaching (Staff & Institutional Advantage)
• Framework for benchmarking success within HE teaching and learning support (Institutional Advantage)
• Essential to driving improvement in, and raising the profile of learning and teaching in HE (Individual advantage).
• Ensuring good practice and excellent student experience (Student Advantage)
• Can be applied to personal development programmes at individual or institutional level to improve teaching quality (Student, Staff, Institutional Advantage)

https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/recognition-accreditation/uk-professional-standards-framework-ukpsf#sthash.hpXNZBl1.dpuf
What are the ideal HE Teacher Standards?

• Evidence-based (Universities are required to provide evidence of how their activities and processes meet their stated standards and objectives.

• Evidence is examined and assessed by peers throughout the quality assurance process.

• Collective and Collegial (Function with the cooperation of all universities and the engagement and expertise of individuals representing key stakeholders such as students, industry etcetera).


• Criteria and Standards for different levels of appointments with exemplars of good practice e.g. Australian University Teaching Criteria and Standards Framework (Chalmers et al, 2014).
What are potential pitfalls of standards

- Explicit performance expectations for staff place onus on individual staff

- Performance expectations and standards for the departments responsible for the resourcing and staffing of the courses still needed

- Focus on individual staff and institutional policies and processes has reached its productive limit

(Chalmers, 2017)
E-portfolios: Bridging Institutional & Individual

• ‘... [T]ells a story. It is the story of knowing. Knowing about things... Knowing oneself... Knowing an audience. Portfolios are students’ own stories of what they know, why they believe they know it, and why others should be of the same opinion. A portfolio is opinion backed by fact... Students prove what they know with samples of their work’.

E-portfolios: Bridging Institutional & Individual

• Change to student centred learning in universities/ staff centred development/ support and resourcing?
• The increased dynamism of digital communications technologies portability across institution/s
• The growing need for accountability in higher education and across some professions,
• The rising fluidity of employment and education among graduates (Clark & Eynon, 2009: 18 – 19).
E-portfolios Increasingly used

• ‘In-house e-Portfolios QUT, University of New South Wales, Victoria University, etcetera linked with Graduate Attributes

• Support of promotion applications of academics in Higher Education by ‘documenting the applicant’s contributions to teaching, research and community’ (Hosego & Parker, 2009).
E-portfolios (Adapted from Westphalen, 2013)

Reflective Practice (Individual, peer, department)

Teaching Standards/ Criteria

Evidence
- Achievement
- Learning
E-Portfolio Components

Dr Linda Westphalen: Teacher Educator

Philosophy of Teaching from a Teacher Educator

My philosophy of teaching proceeds from the theoretical perspective of feminist philosopher, Nel Noddings (1990): ‘chain of care’ is established, extending from me, to the students in my immediate circle, to children and young adults in classrooms in secondary schools. Students need to learn things, but they also need to feel cared for. In 20 years of teaching experience, a sense of caring has never backfired. I take my administrative and teaching responsibilities seriously, and act diligently and respectfully with a sense of care, since the experience of students and the standing of the University of Adelaide and the School of Education are very often at stake.

Piaget and Vygotsky argue that people learn by experiencing knowledge at fundamentally emotional and cognitive levels: they don’t learn because a lecturer prattles. Enthusiasm, care and passion are essential for all teachers,
Michelle Picard as a University Teacher: Teaching Philosophy

Add in Your Teaching Philosophy here:

What is a Philosophy of Teaching Statement?

A philosophy of teaching statement is a narrative that includes:

- your conception of teaching and learning
- a description of how you teach
- justification for why you teach that way

The statement can:

- demonstrate that you have been reflective and purposeful about your teaching
- communicate your goals as an instructor and your corresponding actions in the classroom
- provide an opportunity to point to and tie together the other sections of your portfolio

http://cat.osu.edu/professional-development/teaching-portfolio/philosophy/

You should add a good photo of yourself using the Insert and upload an image of yourself. This should preferably be of you teaching, but you can also just add a smiling, positive image of yourself like the one below.
## Indicative Criteria

"The framework is a practical, flexible guide to assist universities and their academic staff to clarify what constitutes quality teaching. The framework is underpinned by carefully researched definitions and principles of quality teaching that are expressed through seven criteria. The organising principle is alignment with academic appointment and promotional levels. For each criterion the framework suggests standards of achievement that might be applied to each promotional level, cross-referenced to examples of indicative evidence that could be used to demonstrate achievement. The framework was developed with the intention that these criteria, standards and indicative evidence be adapted by individual universities to suit their own context." (Chalmers et al., 2014; http://uniteachingcriteria.edu.au/framework/about/). We have added an 8th criteria related to embodying an enabling philosophy in your teaching. You can delete the columns not relevant to your research and insert files of evidence for each criteria in the table or upload them clearly labelled with the Criteria and Level the evidence is addressing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicative Standards by Criteria</th>
<th>Demonstrating the Criteria</th>
<th>Level B</th>
<th>Level C</th>
<th>Level D</th>
<th>Level E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Design and planning of learning activities</td>
<td>Good practice in relation to this criterion might include: demonstration of: • Preparation • Knowledge of the discipline • Knowledge of the student learning process • Knowledge and appropriate use of teaching techniques</td>
<td>Deep knowledge of the discipline area Well planned learning activities designed to develop the students learning Scholarly/informed approach to learning design Thorough knowledge of the unit material and its contribution in the course</td>
<td>Meets the requirements for level B and Deep knowledge of the discipline area Innovation in the design of teaching, including use of learning technologies Effective preparation and management of...</td>
<td>Meets the requirements for Level C and Leadership in effective curriculum development at a program level Contribution to the teaching or curriculum and/or discipline at a national level</td>
<td>Meets the requirements for Level D and Leadership role and impact in curriculum design and review planning and/or development at a (inter)national level Significant curriculum or...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evidence

is where you can keep all your documents, pdf, audio files, just be wary of the storage you are using as once you have exceeded the Google Sites quota you will need to pay for more storage space.
Department level approaches

Large multi-disciplinary/ diverse Faculty/ Large Multidisciplinary Enabling Program

• Need to have equitable standards across disciplines for promotion and teaching awards

• Need to share practice in teaching and learning across disciplines

• Need to value disciplinarily and professional expectations/ external review/reflection

• Need a sessional staff development program that values diversity, supports individual needs and rewards experience
Process

• Development workshop

• Develop philosophy of teaching

• Address Indicative Criteria/ disciplinary criteria/standards

• Undertake professional development

• Evidence & Reflection & Resources (individual/ peer/ disciplinary)

• Feedback from Staff Developer or Senior Academics

• Application of portfolio for personal, departmental, institutional purposes
The Sessionals

• “For the first time my expertise was valued and I was given recognition. I could share my professional knowledge with others”.

• “I had a choice about learning and evidence, I received feedback and support to find meaningful learning experiences”.
Seeking greater impact

• It helped me to collate my learning and experience and articulate it better. I was for the first time able to communicate with others and get meaningful feedback across disciplines. I felt I had a greater impact and in the end I landed up applying for a senior position elsewhere due to my enhanced confidence.

• We are a small discipline, but still very diverse within the discipline. The E-portfolios helped us to communicate what we believe and communicate to others in the Faculty Community of Practice.

• Because we are so many disciplines and we are separate from the rest of the university in a way, we need to articulate things even more explicitly to the Faculties and each other – the criteria linked to e-portfolios is starting to help me to do this.
The Teaching Fellow

• Working on the eportfolio was a humbling experience in many respects. I’m a highly regarded teacher with an OLT Citation, and writing the eportfolio was often as difficult as writing for the Citation: it felt self-aggrandising. When I set my achievements against a standard, they seemed insignificant and a bit ‘precious’. But then taken as a whole, I was able to see the bigger picture of the teacher – a variety of pedagogical approaches, my values about teaching and students, about improving things that didn’t work or were rushed or misconceived. The trick too was in thinking about my assets as a human being as well as teacher, and rethinking them in terms of academic rigour or theoretical perspectives. It made my promotion possible after so many years and I made the choice to become a teaching fellow.
Bridging the Individual/Institutional Gap

Own and other’s practice linked to institutional, disciplinary and department level criteria/standards

• Reflect

• Reinforce good practice

• Resource
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