

Rewarding & Recognising Teaching/Educational Achievement in Career Progression in Higher Education: work carried out by The Physiological Society

2009: Launch of the Otto Hutter Physiology Teaching Prize, an annual prize and invited lecture that aims to “*recognise outstanding teachers of undergraduate physiology and raise the profile of physiology teaching*”.

Summer 2011: Online survey of members of The Physiological Society (TPS) carried out to assess progress across the sector in implementing the recommendations of a recently-published report¹ by the Academy of Medical Sciences (AMS): “*Redressing the balance: the status and valuation of teaching in academic careers in the biomedical sciences*” (2010). The conclusion from the follow-up survey was that very little progress had been achieved and that career progression in HE was still heavily weighted towards achievements in discipline-based research².

January 2013: meeting between representatives of AMS and TPS; agreement to work together on this initiative with possible involvement of other like-minded societies.

June 2013: Joint Steering Group established with representation from AMS, TPS, Royal Society of Biology (RSB), Heads of University Biosciences (HUBS) and HEA. Outputs:

- **Autumn 2013:** Repeat of TPS online survey with over 250 respondents. Conclusion: some improvement in certain areas (e.g. introduction of teaching prizes and teaching-focused career pathways at some universities) but little progress overall.
- **March 2014:** National workshop to discuss the current academic career progression landscape was held at Charles Darwin House. This was attended by around 80 invited guests including VCs, Pro VCs for Education, Deans, Heads of Departments and representatives from HEFCE, HEA, learned societies plus ‘frontline’ academics.
- **June 2014:** Report published: “*Improving the status and valuation of teaching in the careers of UK academics*”³. The overall conclusion from the 2013 survey and 2014 workshop was that “*the world-class reputation of UK bioscience graduates is under threat if teaching continues to be undervalued in academic careers*”, and the report made some recommendations for change.

Autumn 2015: TPS hosted fringe events with the think tank Demos at the Conservative and Labour Party Conferences: “*Higher Expectations: Who Cares about Teaching in HE?*” Panel speakers included Wes Streeting MP, Nick Hillman (Director of the Higher Education Policy Institute), John Gill (Editor, Times Higher Education) and Megan Dunn (President, NUS). TPS was represented by Prof Blair Grubb and Prof Judy Harris.

September 2015: Judy Harris was a member of a Steering Group set up by the RSB to put together a career framework to guide academics who focus on teaching. This was launched in May 2016⁴.

September 2015: TPS published *Recognising Teachers in the Life Sciences*⁵ in collaboration with AMS, RSB and HUBS. This includes case studies of 32 academics who have been promoted wholly, or in part, through achievements in teaching and education.

January 2016: TPS hosted an education policy workshop at Hodgkin Huxley House⁶. Contributors included Nicolette Divecha from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and Nick Hillman, Director of the Higher Education Policy Institute. Discussion included topics related to

the recently published HE Green Paper “*Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice*”. Representatives of TPS, BPS and RSB also presented the work of their respective societies in supporting teaching in HE, including its impact on career progression.

June 2016: Judy Harris spoke about TPS work in this area at the Enhancing Student Learning Through Innovative Scholarship (ESLTIS) conference at UCL; subsequent discussions with Prof Derek Raine (Chair, HE Advisory Group, Institute of Physics; IoP) led to agreement that the two societies would explore the possibility of working together in this area and also explore involvement of other STEM learned societies/professional bodies.

Autumn 2016: TPS hosted fringe events with the think tank Demos at the Conservative, Labour and SNP Party Conferences: “*TEF vs REF: Are Teaching and Research Now Adversaries?*” Panel members included Lord David Willetts (previous Universities and Science Minister), Roberta Blackman Woods MP (Chair of the APPG on Universities), Shirley-Anne Somerville MSP (Minister for Higher Education and Science in Scotland), Roger Mullin MP and Carol Monaghan MP. The TPS was represented by Prof Bridget Lumb, Prof Blair Grubb and Dr Lucy Donaldson. These events gave rise to a report⁷ outlining some recommendations to the government on the Higher Education and Research Bill.

December 2016: Scoping workshop held at Hodgkin Huxley House, attended by representatives of IoP, RSB, HUBS, Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC), the Royal Statistical Society (RSS) and TPS. Participants discussed areas of mutual interest with respect to the reward and recognition of teaching in career progression and explored potential collaborations in this area.

January 2017: Judy Harris and Chrissy Stokes met with Ruth Graham, Royal Academy of Engineering (RAEng) and the author of two relevant reports: “*Does teaching advance your academic career?*” and “*An interim report on the development of a template for evaluating teaching achievement*”⁸ in order to discuss common interests in this area.

January 2017: TPS hosted a workshop at Hodgkin Huxley House in which the Teaching Excellence Framework was discussed by representatives from Universities UK and learned societies representing STEM subjects across the HE sector: the Academy of Medical Sciences, IoP, RAEng, RSB, RSC, RSS and TPS. Amongst other conclusions, it was agreed that the current TEF metrics were not a good proxy for teaching quality in universities or the extent to which teaching was recognised in career progression.

¹ <http://www.acmedsci.ac.uk/viewFile/publicationDownloads/Teaching.pdf>

² Harris, J. (2011). “*The Status and Valuation of Medical Sciences Teaching in Academic Careers.*” *Physiology News* 85: 48. <http://edition.pagesuite-professional.co.uk//launch.aspx?eid=dda51cf7-dc8e-4b6c-9f97-026f3c564292>

³ https://www.physoc.org/sites/default/files/page/Improving_the_status_and_valuation_of_teaching_in_the_careers_of_UK_academics_WEB_version.pdf

⁴ https://www.rsb.org.uk/images/HE_Teaching_careers_progression_document_08.02.2016.pdf

⁵ <http://www.physoc.org/sites/default/files/page/Recognising%20Teachers%20FINAL.pdf>

⁶ <http://www.physoc.org/promoting-and-sharing-excellence-higher-education-teaching>

⁷ <http://www.physoc.org/sites/default/files/page/TEF%20vs%20REF-%20Are%20Teaching%20and%20Research%20now%20adversaries.pdf>

⁸ <http://www.evaluatingteaching.com/>