



Management Initiatives to Ensure Quality Teaching

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Quality Teaching

- Graduates remember inspirational teachers and are influenced by such teachers
- Universities are lucky that some teachers prove to be inspirational. But what can universities do to ensure quality teaching?



Management Responsibilities

Management can influence the quality of teaching/learning through its management of:

- Quality Assurance System
- Student recruitment, admission and retention
- Provision of appropriate accommodation, equipment and facilities
- Development of relationships with external bodies including industry



Management Responsibilities

(contd)

- Linking research and teaching programmes
- Internationalisation of programme and university
- Creation of fora for exchange of practical/technical and scholarly activities, with a focus on good quality experiences
- Recruitment and Training of good academics



Quality Assurance System

- Validation of programmes and subsequent review at 5-yearly intervals
- Involvement of external academics, industry and students in the validation/review process
- Establishment of Programme Committee, meeting each term, to monitor implementation of programme and the resolution of problems. Committee to have staff and student members



Quality Assurance System

(contd)

- Annual survey of student opinion on the programme and each module
- Production of an annual report by the Programme Committee and the development of an action plan for improvement based on report
- Monitoring of implementation of action plan by management
- Appointment of External Examiners, drawn from academia and industry, who report annually on standards achieved



Recruitment and Admission of Good Students

- Need to avoid recruiting students onto programmes that are wrong for them
- Publication of clear, accurate information on each programme
- Open days and other opportunities for potential students to get answers to questions about the programme
- Development of a good reputation through publication of research activities



Provision of Good Quality Accommodation and Facilities

- Teaching facilities need to be fit for purpose
- Equipment should ideally be state of the art
- Configuration of space should suit the teaching strategy (e.g. mix of lecture theatres and rooms that facilitate discussion)
- Well intentioned and friendly staff in a well-resourced library
- Sports and leisure facilities to facilitate healthy life style



Development of Relationship with Industry/Profession which the Programme serves

- Involvement of Industry/Profession in the development of the Programme
- Membership of the Validation Panel
- Appointment of External Examiner drawn from practice
- Placement of students in Industry or Profession
- Projects drawn from Industry/Profession
- Practitioners as guest speakers



Linking Research and Teaching Programmes

- Development of research activities in the university
- Linking of research activities and the taught programmes with publishing opportunities
- Encouragement of undergraduate research activities that are related to Postgraduate research
- Teaching to be regarded as equally “worthy” to research



Internationalisation of Programme and the University

- Recruitment of some faculty members from outside the country
- Development and implementation of a policy on international student recruitment
- Student and staff exchange programme with partner universities
- Internationalisation of the curriculum
- Involvement in EU and global research
- Development of an ethos that is supportive for non-national students and staff



Creation of Scholarly Ethos

- Management has responsibility for the creation of a Scholarly Ethos
- Both research and teaching must be valued
- Awards for excellence have a part to play
- Nomination for awards to come from colleagues, students or self-nomination?



Recruitment and Training of Academic Staff

- Development of appropriate profile for academic staff as part of recruitment process
- Involvement of external academics and industrialists in selection process
- Provision of appropriate induction programme for new staff
- Provision of training programme in pedagogy and assessment
- Encouragement of research and publishing opportunities
- Leadership by management in “valuing” excellent teaching



What does Academic Development accomplish?

- Study by Roisin Donnelly* of the impact of DIT programme on those who completed it
- Covered the period 2001 to 2003
- Three main impacts on teaching practice
 - (a) Design new instructional strategies
 - (b) Use of new teaching approaches
 - (c) Alteration of beliefs about third level teaching and learning

*See references



Shifting Position of Academic Development

- Effect of changes in regard to massification, managerialism and accountability (Land)
- Increased emphasis on quality in teaching in higher education
- Belief by some that Academic Development is not relevant
- Academic Development as an extra burden



Impact within DIT of Teacher Training Programme

- The programme has increased the professionalism of teaching staff
- A culture of dialogue about teaching, learning and scholarship has developed both instrumentally and organically
- More synergy both within disciplines and across disciplines



Impact within DIT of Teacher Training Programme *(contd)*

- A more strategic approach to the use of educational technology has emerged
- Increased involvement in joint publications and research projects



The Effectiveness of University Teachers' Training

- Study by Graham Gibbs and Martin Coffey of the effectiveness of training in 22 universities in 8 countries
- Reports evidence of a range of positive changes in teachers and in their students
- Found a contrasting lack of change or negative changes in untrained teachers from a control group
- Type of teacher training made no impact on on ??

Some Questions for Discussion



- Academic development programme to be mandatory?
- Is there any quantifiable evidence that there is a return on investment in academic development?
- Does top-down compliance approach work as well as improving academic identity value?
- Where should academic development units be located in university organisation structure?
- If management cannot rate teachers on a numerical scales, what expectation can they have of teachers – preparation, order, coherence, accurate recording, detailed planning?



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