



“What Works” Conference on
Fostering quality teaching
in higher education

**HOW TO MAXIMISE THE ADDED VALUE
OF STUDENT EXPERIENCE?**

8-9 April 2014

OECD Headquarters, 2 rue André Pascal, 75016 Paris

1. The OECD What Works Conference

The OECD Higher Education Programme (IMHE) [“What Works” conferences](#) have been a successful series of workshops and meetings designed to **assist IMHE members** by reviewing current policy and practice while disseminating examples of successful innovation. The conferences are intended to equip participants with **inspirational examples** of institutional strategy development, as well as provide an understanding of the conditions for implementation and the context, measurement and assessment of impact.

Added value: A “What Works” conference is a unique chance to **meet different leaders and practitioners**, to **share perspectives and experiences** and to **build institutional capacity** in designing and implementing effective higher education policies.

The “What Works” Conference on *Fostering quality teaching in higher education* has been developed by the OECD Higher Education Programme (IMHE), which has asserted itself as an **important actor in higher education**:

- OECD/IMHE has a long history of leadership in comparative assessment, reform and innovation in higher education.
- OECD/IMHE has evidence and statistics from the world’s developed and developing economies.
- OECD/IMHE provides data, evidence, policy insights and shared practices to allow better understanding of the evolving higher education landscape, identify the main challenges, create more effective strategies and take advantage of emerging opportunities.

⇒ **From policy analysis to policy practice, this “What Works” Conference aims to explore what works best in higher education.**

⇒ **It will help higher education policy makers and institutional leaders see how to maximise the added value of the student experience.**

The Conference will address such questions as:

- How to respond to the growing demand for relevant teaching?
- How to ensure that higher education will lead to gainful employment and equip students with the right skills and aptitudes?
- How to assist human resources in leveraging quality teaching?
- How to embed quality teaching throughout the entire institution?
- How to increase the efficiency of teaching when funding constraints become more stringent?

2. Structure

Held over one and a half days, the Conference will bring together around 60 leaders and practitioners. The Conference will consist of:

- **An introductory keynote** setting the scene and outlining the key challenges facing quality teaching in higher education
- **Breakout sessions** – Each session addresses an overarching topic with a group of some 20 attendees. Each breakout session features up to four field cases, presented by university leaders and policy makers. The attendees then discuss the policies, strategies and implementation and collaboratively draw lessons to be learned from the presentations.
- **Engagement sessions** – Conference participants are invited to explore practical issues in small groups. Thus everyone has a chance to participate in the brainstorming in sessions moderated by higher education practitioners. Consolidated feedback from all engagement sessions are presented in plenary.
- **A closing keynote** on the lessons learned from the “What Works” Conference highlights possible axes for development of quality teaching.

3. Why Quality Teaching is a key issue

In recent decades, the number of students has grown substantially in almost every education system. At the same time, the employment market is becoming more competitive and higher education institutions are urged to prepare students for entry into this competitive environment by equipping them with appropriate skills, knowledge, values and attributes. There is a strong drive to build and create knowledge together with an understanding of working life and reformulate the concept of knowledge in learning situations. In other words: institutions are bound to provide **quality teaching that leads to learning outcomes and, above all, added value for their students.**

This is an easy statement to make, but a difficult reality to accomplish. Higher education institutions are complex organisations under pressure from many different directions; fostering quality teaching is a daily challenge. Most universities have designed institution-wide teaching and learning strategies, but struggle to implement them and effectively assess their impact on the learning experience. Which levers should be activated and how should they be co-ordinated (curriculum development/professional training for teachers)? How can teaching be a priority when the academic career essentially depends on research performance? How can the overall learning needs of students be matched with the teaching passions and skills of the faculty? How does one ensure programmes are relevant for students living in a globalised world?

Quality teaching is not an isolated issue; it requires the commitment of the entire institution. **Fostering quality teaching is therefore a multi-level endeavour:**

- Institution-wide: including projects such as policy design, support for organisation and internal quality assurance systems.
- Programmes: comprising actions to measure and enhance the design, content and delivery of academic programmes.
- Individuals: including initiatives that help teachers achieve their mission, encouraging teachers to innovate and support improvements to student learning and adopt a learner-oriented approach.

4. What the “What Works” Conference will address

The complexity and uncertainty of society and the economy require educational institutions to **continuously adapt while upholding quality standards.** All institutions are concerned: research-intensive universities, community colleges or vocational institutes, etc. In practice, educational institutions will have to learn how to best serve the student community.

The “What Works” Conference on *Fostering quality teaching in higher education* will help institutional leaders and policy makers identify the levers and their interplay for effectively improving quality teaching by **maximising the added value of the student experience.**

The Conference attendees will collaboratively explore the following questions:

- How to respond to the growing demand for relevant teaching?
- How to ensure that higher education will lead to gainful employment and equip students with the right skills and aptitudes?
- How to assist human resources in leveraging quality teaching?
- How to use technology as a vehicle for high quality education?
- How to embed quality teaching throughout the entire institution?
- How to increase the efficiency of teaching when funding constraints become more stringent?

Keynoter speakers:

- Charles Fadel, Founder and Chairman, Center for Curriculum Redesign
- John L. Davies, Emeritus Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Professor of Higher Education Management at Anglia Ruskin University, UK

Breakout session core themes:

- Matching higher education with labour market/societal requirements
- Raising awareness of the quality teaching imperative
- Technology as a driver to active effective training
- Revamping programme structure, content and pedagogy
- Supporting and engaging human capital in quality teaching
- Turning new learning paradigms into reality (active learning, student-centred teaching, student self-assessment...)

Engagement session themes:

- How to practically identify and measure the effectiveness of higher education for students?
- How to implement an effective and reliable quality teaching-focused evaluation system?

Presenters will include:

- Denis Berthiaume, University of Applied Sciences and Arts Western Switzerland, Switzerland
- Peter Creticos, DePaul University, USA
- Dan Derricott, University of Lincoln, UK
- Milena Dobрева, University of Malta, Malta
- Karma El Hassan, American University of Beirut, Lebanon
- George El Yahchouchi, Université Saint-Esprit de Kaslik, Lebanon
- Koen Goethals, Ghent University, Belgium
- Florian Gröbblinghoff, German Rectors Conference (HRK), Germany
- Päivi Huatori, University of Applied Sciences Lahti, Finland
- Heather Kanuka, University of Alberta, Canada
- Fiorella Kostoris, Italy
- Iain MacLaren, National University of Ireland Galway, Ireland
- Erin Nordal, European Students' Union (ESU), Belgium
- Roberta Piazza, University of Catania, Italy
- Pika Radmilovic, University of Maribor, Slovenia
- Martti Raevaara, Aalto University, Finland
- Leticia Rodriguez Audirac, University of Veracruz, Mexico
- Gülsün Saglam, Istanbul Technical University, Turkey
- Alenoush Saroyan, McGill University, Canada
- Hiroaki Sato, Osaka University, Japan
- Lorraine Stefani, University of Auckland, New Zealand
- Anita Walsh, University of London, UK