

Policy Position: Recognising Teaching in Higher Education

Purpose:

To discuss and suggest amendments to the Royal Society of Chemistry's **draft** policy position statement about recognising teaching in higher education.

Background:

The Royal Society of Chemistry is developing a number of position statements to guide our policy and influencing work. We would appreciate your input as key stakeholders in the area of chemistry teaching at universities.

Summary position

The Royal Society of Chemistry believes that the status, recognition and career opportunities for those involved in teaching in the UK's higher education institutions needs to be improved.

Introduction

The role of higher education in the UK is two-fold, conducting cutting-edge research and educating future generations. High-quality chemistry teaching at universities has a crucial role in providing a steady supply of talented, skilled individuals who will become the next generation of scientists and members of a wider, scientifically literate workforce.

The Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) has raised the profile of teaching in higher education. We are supportive of its stated purposes to; better inform students' choices about what and where to study; raise esteem for teaching; recognise and reward excellence in teaching and better meet the needs of employers, business, industry and the professions. However, the status and recognition of staff with predominantly teaching roles still sometimes falls below that of their research-focussed colleagues.

We hope that the TEF will help to resolve this issue, but we remain concerned that the metrics it uses are proxies, which cannot truly measure teaching quality. This could undermine the effectiveness and value of the TEF.

Key messages

The Royal Society of Chemistry supports teachers from primary to higher education level. We believe that the following would be benefit teaching and learning of the chemical sciences at higher education institutions in the UK:

1. Teaching and research should have parity of status within higher education.
2. Higher education staff should be appropriately recognised and rewarded for their teaching work.
3. There should be recognisable career progression pathways for people wishing to pursue teaching focussed roles or combined teaching and scientific research roles.

Annette Farrell, May 2019