

zhb Higher Education Research Colloquium Series

Guest Talk: Prof. Dr. Rosemary Deem

What is teaching excellence, (why) does it matter and (how) should it be rewarded?

Many higher education institutions both inside and outside Europe already have teaching prizes and there are also some national teaching excellence initiatives, whilst student-led awards are also increasingly common. Land and Gordon (2015) in a recent paper for the Higher Education Funding Council for England discuss different modalities of teaching excellence (from competence to expertise and high recognition) and high or low fidelity awards (whether evidence is required or not), rewarding teams and administrators as well as academics, different kinds of organisations or groups making awards and the operational cost of teaching excellence initiatives. But whilst they and others make comparisons between the relatively high rewards of research excellence initiatives and the much lower rewards for teaching excellence, it is argued in the presentation that this comparison may be flawed. In addition, it can be harder to evaluate teaching than research excellence since teaching excellence is hard to define, excellent and innovative teaching do not necessarily go together and teaching excellence is not a linear process. No-one is always an excellent teacher, the gender and ethnicity of teachers can affect perceptions of excellence and we do not know if excellent teaching always produces excellent students. So what is the point of assessing teaching excellence? If there is a point, how should we do it? Finally, how, if at all should teaching excellence play into league tables and rankings?

Prof. Rosemary Deem is currently Vice Principal (Education), Dean of the Doctoral School and Professor of Higher Education Management at Royal Holloway, University of London, UK. In 2013 she was appointed OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours list for services to higher education and social sciences and in July 2014 she was awarded an honorary Doctor of Letters by the University of Leicester for her academic contribution to the sociology of education. In September 2014 she was elected as incoming Chair of the UK Council for Graduate Education, the first woman ever to hold this position. Her research interests include higher education policy, leadership, governance and management, public service modernization, research excellence evaluations and initiatives, inequality and diversity (particularly gender) in educational and other organizational settings, doctoral education and training, research and teaching relationships and the purposes of higher education.

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Vogelpothsweg 78 (CDI-Building), Room 114 | Hochschuldidaktik // Hochschulforschung