

Guidance note:

A rationale for implementing the activity

Enabling teachers to undertake research projects can be a catalyst for the development of collaborative projects among teachers, students and employers which are aligned to the strategic educational aims of their colleges.

Organisational strategic support of this form of scholarship can provide evidence for Foundation Degree Awarding Powers and Taught Degree Awarding Powers applications, since it contributes to evidence of “scholarship and the pedagogical effectiveness of staff”. Additionally, in terms of the TEF Framework Specification, the approach provides evidence of “a learning environment which is enriched by student exposure to, and involvement in, provision at the forefront of scholarship, research and/or professional practice”.

Research suggests that there is an appetite among college higher education (HE) teachers to undertake research as part of their own personal and professional development (Feather, 2012). The benefits of teachers undertaking research applicable to their context can be summarised as follows:

- Research can positively impact on teaching and learning by securing time for professional reflection, deepening an understanding of pedagogy, addressing challenges and issues, testing out ideas and developing innovative practice (creating new pedagogies).
- Teacher researchers involving their students (including as co-researchers) can lead to an increased student awareness of the research cycle, establish its relevance and expose students to the current and evolving body of research in the area of study.
- The approach can support teachers’ professional development and improved confidence in terms of their professional identity. Further, the development of a scholarly profile and engagement with a wider scholarly

community beyond their own organisation brings further benefits to their practice and the experience of their students.

Ultimately, this type of endeavour can enhance the quality of teaching and learning, ensure the curriculum remains current and support teacher-researchers to cultivate their professional development (and individual scholarly profile) for the benefit of themselves, their students and the organisations in which they work (LSIS, 2014; Mixed Economy Group, 2013; QAA, 2013).

Sustaining the activity

- Allocate the resources needed to ensure sustainability.
- Consider ways to incorporate the scheme into existing organisational processes, rather than viewing it as a separate activity.
- Document and evaluate outcomes and outputs to rationalise funding.
- In settings where there are fewer HE students and teachers (as in the trial and test leading to the resource), consider collaborating with partners. There are benefits to taking this approach in terms of the economies of scale leveraged from pooling resources. Partners could take turns in appointing a co-ordinator of a cross-college group each year.

References

Feather, D. (2012). *Do lecturers delivering Higher Education in Further Education desire to conduct research?* *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, 17 (3). pp. 335-347.

LSIS. (2014). *Exploring Scholarship and Scholarly Activity in College Based HE* https://www.aoc.co.uk/sites/default/files/MEG_L SIS%20Exploring%20scholarship%20and%20scholarly%20activity%20in%20college-based%20HE%20April%202014.pdf

Mixed Economy Group. (2013). Literature Review for Scholarly Activity Research Paper <http://www.mixedeconomygroup.co.uk/news/meg-literature-review-for-scholarly-activity-research-paper>

QAA. (2013). *Guidance on scholarship and the pedagogical effectiveness of staff: Expectations for Foundation Degree-awarding powers and for taught degree-awarding powers*. Gloucester: QAA