

Exemplars of Excellence in Student Education

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1 Introduction

The University has clear, balanced grade profiles for academic staff that match individuals' activities and skills to UoE grades 6-10, with respect to teaching, research, knowledge exchange, management and leadership. Measures of productive activity and excellent performance in research, management and leadership are seen to be well understood within their disciplines and cultures¹. Concrete and unequivocally evidenced exemplars of excellence in teaching have proved to be more elusive. We have made outstanding promotions for teaching-focussed activity. However, we have to date lacked an accepted set of flexible and dynamic exemplars of achievement with respect to student education.

By definition, a set of exemplars should not be exhaustive. It will develop continuously as:

- experience improves clarity and usefulness;
- teaching methods evolve;
- new exemplars are defined and assimilated (see section 5).

This document therefore provides additional guidance for the Teaching sections of the existing grade profiles, <u>8.2/8.3 9.2/9.3 and 10.2/10.3 for grades 8, 9 and 10 respectively.</u>

It also aims to assist colleagues in:

- preparing a case for promotion/reward;
- acting as members of promotion panels.

It provides concrete, illustrative examples of excellent contribution to student education that match what are generally perceived to be robust measures of research excellence.

However - the Exemplars are not a set of boxes to be ticked.

Most nominations for promotion/reward include at least two, if not all three of:

- student education;
- research, knowledge transfer, outreach etc;
- leadership and administration.

This document will therefore inform all reward/promotion nominations, raising quality with respect to the student education dimension.

The Exemplars offer an insight into the nature, depth and breadth of impact of the skills and contributions that can give substance to the generic activities in the grade profiles and the nature of the evidence needed to support them.

Rewards for excellence in student education must be equal in status, and most importantly in value to the University and our students, to those for excellence in research, innovation and leadership. This document therefore proposes examples of achievements in student education to maximise the evidence that informs the value judgements made by promotions and reward committees.

assessment of research quality combines several such measures.

¹ These measures are, however, individually imperfect. For example, monographs are key measures of excellence in some subjects, while substantial research grants are in others. Proper

1.1 Aims of the Exemplars

- To reward individual achievements in student education that are of measurable benefit to student education, particularly in the University;
- To maximise consistency of quality in the achievements cited across Schools and disciplines;
- To ensure that they are of equivalent value and status, and are as challenging to attain, as those for research-focussed activity;
- To maximise the use of external evidence in assessing performance;
- To present examples of sources of robust internal evidence where external evidence is not feasible;
- To encourage candidates to present multiple, but not necessarily all of, these exemplars of excellence, as do candidates for researchfocussed reward/promotion²;
- To encourage the presentation of new examples of excellence that are of the same quality as those in this document.

A portfolio of multiple, sustained contributions are sought for research-related promotions and this principle must apply to all reward processes.

We have grouped these exemplars for clarity. The groupings are not, however, mutually exclusive. For example, a valuable external activity that brings esteem to the individual will reflect well on the University and is likely to make a substantial contribution to student education.

Internal evidence may come from the Head of School, Head of College or Vice Principal, as appropriate to particular exemplar of excellence. The evidence will therefore carry that authority. However, it is accepted that details of the evidence are likely to be sourced from, for example, the School's Director of Teaching, Senior Tutor, a Dean or a member of senior management.

Where documentary evidence can be included in the reward paperwork, it should be. Panels will, however, work on the assumption that a candidate is telling the truth and will only follow up sources of evidence if necessary. This is consistent with the attitude and procedures for presenting evidence of research excellence.

Promotion is designed to recognise sustained past performance. However, it comes with the clear expectation that promoted staff will continue to develop excellence and perform at, and, it is to be hoped, beyond that level. The ethos of the Exemplars is that they demonstrate a contribution at a particular grade. For example, the Grade 10 (Professor) exemplars indicate what is expected of a Professor and therefore the level of achievement that candidates for promotion to that level should be exhibiting.

It is therefore axiomatic that the exemplars present achievements that are above the individual's current grade and therefore, taken together, may justify promotion and regrading.

1.2 Exemplars, reward and annual review

Annual review and reward/promotion are separate processes. However, annual review should:

- Match individuals' skills and efforts to the School's needs (to include the individual's current and future balance of teaching, research, leadership etc);
- Discuss individuals' aspirations in all dimensions of academic work and optimise their likely achievement;
- Reduce or remove barriers to individuals' success if possible;
- Discuss progress toward promotion, including timescales and activities to maximise its success. The Exemplars should inform this with respect to the student education dimension.

activities listed; most will only include a subset."

² This principle is already embedded in the Grade Profiles as "No job is expected to include all the

2 GRADE 8 - Exemplars

Promotion applications need high-quality evidence. Within each of these sections we provide examples of evidence that an applicant can use to support an application and that a panel can use to inform its value judgement. Applications are not expected to cite all of these evidence sources and the examples listed are not intended to be exhaustive.

Most pieces of evidence will be more or less biased. For example, student questionnaire data may exhibit unconscious bias with respect to gender, first language, age and course content. It is difficult to attain good feedback in, say *Statistics for Biologists*, or *Electromagnetics for Engineers* but these are vital subjects. All data should therefore be looked at holistically and in context.

This is not a "tick-box" exercise and a sensible number of strong exemplars is more persuasive than a long list that includes prosaic exemplars. In particular, simply holding a leadership post or delivering a set of lectures is not useful evidence. Impact and effectiveness must be highlighted.

2.1 Direct teaching and support for University of Edinburgh students.

With internal evidence

Awards and nominations

For Example

- Chancellor's Award
- multiple nominations for, or receipt of a Students' Association award
- investigator on a Principal's Teaching Award grant
- clearly, external awards are also valuable

Potential Source of Confirmation

- Students' Association
- Director of Teaching
- Head of School
- Awarding body

Course delivery

Successful and varied portfolio of excellent teaching (including, but not restricted to, lectures) over a sustained period, with excellent student feedback. This activity is particularly welcome in sensitive and challenging classes

For Example

- large classes of early-years students
 - these are especially sensitive to the quality of teaching
 - and affect large numbers of students at a crucial stage
- courses that are crucial to the subject and to graduates' wider attributes, but may be unpopular,
 - For example, Statistics for Biologists, Electromagnetics for Engineers
- Subject area-related engagement with practice for enhancement of learning and employability

Potential Source of Confirmation

 Director of Teaching or Programme Director

Course development

Successful and varied portfolio of excellent teaching (including, but not restricted to, lectures) over a sustained period, with excellent student feedback. This activity is particularly welcome in sensitive and challenging classes

For Example

- significant contribution to the design and development of a successful new course
- successful major re-design of an existing course
 - for example syllabus change or the introduction of new and improved teaching methods
 - potentially including significant input to the School and College approval processes
 - creating links between courses thereby enhancing students' understanding and confidence
 - Course development that conveys the importance of equality and diversity in our curricula

Potential Source of Confirmation

 Director of Teaching or Programme Director

Innovative learning - delivery and development of improvements

Clearly identifiable contribution to a valuable new development in innovative learning

For Example

- identify innovative teaching strategies that improve student engagement
 - such as inquiry-based teaching, collaborative learning
- enhancements to the use of digital learning technology
- promoting useful synergies between two programmes
- innovative improvements to methods of assessment

Potential Source of Confirmation

- Director of Teaching
- Programme Director

Improvement in teaching practice

Clearly identifiable contribution to a "step-change" improvement in learning. This need not be pedagogically innovative as it may simply involve teaching existing content substantially and sustainably more effectively.

For Example

- identify areas in need of revision or improvement
- contribute to the planning, design and development of objectives and materials
- clearly identifiable contribution to a 'step-change' in the development of learning

Potential Source of Confirmation

- Director of Teaching
- Programme Director

Personal tutoring (during years where the Personal Tutoring system existed)

Successful Personal Tutor with excellent student feedback for multiple years

For Example

- support personal tutees' academic progress and development
- provide effective and timely signposting to appropriate student support functions.
- help tutees to navigate University regulations and policies
- introduce innovative improvements to the provision of support
- where relevant, evidence of adaptation to meet the needs of students with disabilities or special needs

- Senior Tutor
- Head of School

Improvements to the student experience

Clear contributions to, for example, teaching, assessment and student support that improves the experience of multiple students

For Example

- enhancements to student engagement
- enhancements to student transitions between school, university and years of study
- clear improvement in student achievement and retention
- clear improvement in support for WP (widening participation) students
- successful work with Alumni
- where relevant, evidence of contribution to meeting the needs of students with disabilities or special needs
- Active involvement with student extra-curricular activities

Potential Source of Confirmation

Director of Teaching

2.2 Leadership in student education

With internal evidence

Course Organiser

Substantial, positive contribution to the organisation of a major course, perhaps within a course team for more than one year. This may include identifying and optimising resources for the course

For Example

- demonstrate academic ownership of courses
- design teaching materials and delivery
- set, mark and assess work
- provide timely and appropriate feedback to students
- contribute to future-proofing courses for potential changes that might arise in their external context
 - and between reviews/reaccreditations
- creating links between courses

Potential Source of Confirmation

- Director of Teaching
- Programme Director

Course/Programme support and organisation

Development of course support

For Example

- leading tutor and demonstrator training
- devising new processes for improvements to provide effective and efficient student engagement and feedback
- development of new and successful assessments that have enhanced student learning and student experience

- Director of Teaching
- Programme Director

Community-Building

For Example

- clear and demonstrable improvement to the formation of student or student/staff learning communities
 - i.e. co-design of provision that embeds the experience of community, partners and/or learners
 - while it is not necessary to have been the lead on this, proactive involvement is essential
- demonstrable contribution to building wider communities ("outreach") that enhance the student experience
- contribution and leadership in open days and recruitment
- organisation of international exchanges, and support of international students
- Activities performed as a Cohort Lead

Potential Source of Confirmation

- Director of Teaching
- Programme Director

School, College or University committee work

Substantial, positive contribution to an influential committee or working party in the area of student education

For Example

- contribution to or drafting of reviews, proposals, procedures, etc.
- regular attendance at meetings and involvement in the work of the committee
- taking forward university wide initiatives
 - e.g. SLICCS

Potential Source of Confirmation

Committee Chair

2.3 Dissemination of excellence in student education

With internal evidence

Contributor or presenter - internal education event

Contributor (for example - presenter, facilitator) in a teaching event

For Example

- A teaching session at a School away day
- the University's Learning and Teaching Conference
- Institute for Academic Development teaching event on student education

Potential Source of Confirmation

- Director of Teaching
- Programme Director from inviting School
- Institute for Academic Development

With external evidence

Publications on pedagogy

Authorship of publications on subject specific or general pedagogy

For Example

- includes contributions to books
- contributions to subject-specific community or blogs
- contributions to practitioners' newsletters, blogs, etc.

- Journal
- Conference

Education conference presentation.

Conference presentation (talk or poster) to national/international conferences on Education

For Example

• paper presented at research or teaching conference, colloquium, workshop, etc.

Potential Source of Confirmation

- Conference
- Host/organiser

Presentation on student education

Presentation at external Higher Education institution

For Example

- School staff teaching "away day" at another institution
- paper presented as part of research series

Potential Source of Confirmation

Invitation from HE institution

2.4 Esteem and recognition

With internal evidence

Commendation by external examiners

Commendation at least once either by name or course in a Board of Examiners' report

Potential Source of Confirmation

- Head of School
- Director of Teaching
- Board Chair.

Commendation in formal teaching review

Commendation at least once either by name or course in formal teaching review

For Example

- Professional body
- Teaching Programme Review
- Postgraduate Programme Review

Potential Source of Confirmation

- Head of School
- School QA Officer

Contribution to professional accreditation

Clear and significant contribution as to the process of external accreditation by a professional body

For Example

- leading a focus group with the accreditation panel
- responsibility for elements of the accreditation documentation or process

Potential Source of Confirmation

- Head of School
- Director of Teaching

With external evidence

Advance HE (HEA) recognition

Appointed Fellow of HEA or substantive steps towards Fellowship completed

For Example

• Receipt of positive feedback on submissions to date

- Advance HE
- Institute for Academic Development

3 GRADE 9 - Senior Lecturer/Reader: Exemplars

Promotion applications need high-quality evidence. Within each of these sections we provide examples of evidence that an applicant can use to support an application and that a panel can use to inform its value judgement. Applications are not expected to cite all of these evidence sources and the examples listed are not intended to be exhaustive.

Most pieces of evidence will be more or less biased. For example, student questionnaire data may exhibit unconscious bias with respect to gender, first language, age and course content. It is difficult to attain good feedback in, say *Statistics for Biologists*, or *Electromagnetics for Engineers* but these are vital subjects. All data should therefore be looked at holistically and in context.

This is not a "tick-box" exercise and a sensible number of strong exemplars is more persuasive than a long list that includes prosaic exemplars. In particular, simply holding a leadership post or delivering a set of lectures is not useful evidence. Impact and effectiveness must be highlighted.

3.1 Direct teaching and support for University of Edinburgh Students.

With internal evidence

Awards and nominations

Award nominations in multiple years

For Example

- Chancellor's award
- Students' association
- clearly, external awards are also valuable

Potential Source of Confirmation

- Students' Association
- Head of School

Excellence in student support

Effective, sustained contribution as a Personal Tutor (during years where the Personal Tutor system existed), Cohort Lead, or in a more general context

Potential Source of Confirmation

- Head of School
- Senior Tutor

Favourable student feedback

Demonstrated, extended, excellence "in class" teaching, recognised by students and peers and evidenced in student feedback

Potential Source of Confirmation

- Collated student feedback
- Head of School

Innovative Learning

Substantive, sustained contribution to the development and delivery of innovative methods that enhance learning. This may include contribution to improved assessment and feedback

Potential Source of Confirmation

Vice Principal Students

Leadership of new practice in student support

Implementation of a significant and effective new practice

For Example

- Improving the Student Support system for School, College or across the University
- Improving the support for WP (Widening Participation) students

- Head of School
- Head of College
- Dean

Step-change" development in learning and teaching - substantial contribution

For Example

- Membership of implementation group at School, College, University level
- successful secondment to Institute of Academic
 Development/Principal's Teaching Award Scheme award holder

Potential Source of Confirmation

• Vice Principal Students

Significant improvements to the student experience

Major contributions to, for example, teaching, assessment and student support that improves the experience of multiple students

For Example

- enhancements to student engagement
- enhancements to student transitions between school, university and years of study
- clear improvement in student achievement and retention
- clear improvement in support for WP (widening participation)
- successful work with Alumni
- where relevant, evidence of contribution to meeting the needs of students with disabilities or special needs
- Active involvement with student extra-curricular activities

Potential Source of Confirmation

Director of Teaching

3.2 Leadership in student education

With internal evidence

Leadership in teaching at School level

Effective, sustained performance, causing positive, sustainable change

For Example

- Course Organiser
- Year Co-Ordinator,
- Senior Tutor

Potential Source of Confirmation

Head of School

Excellence in developing student education at the University

As with all exemplars, merely holding the post is not useful evidence. Impact and effectiveness must be highlighted.

For Example

- Programme Director
- Head of Subject Area
- Depute Director of Teaching
- Exchange Co-Ordinator
- Dear
- Mentor for colleagues in developing teaching

Potential Source of Confirmation

Head of School

Teaching Programme Review (TPR/PPR) and Enhancement-Led Institutional Review (ELIR)

Effective membership

For Example

- Teaching Programme Review panels
- Postgraduate Programme Review panels
- Leadership of a Teaching Programme Review/Postgraduate Programme Review
- Substantial contribution to the University's ELIR process

Potential Source of Confirmation

Assistant Principal QA

With external evidence

Policy development for University education - major contribution

Effective and sustained service on a major external educational Committee

For Example

- Government
- Scottish Funding Council
- Office for Students
- Advance HE
- Quality Assurance Agency
- Learned Society

Potential Source of Confirmation

• External Committee Chair

3.3 Dissemination of excellence in student education

With internal evidence

Authorship of textbook

Adoption beyond the author's own teaching

Potential Source of Confirmation

Head of School

With external evidence

Publications on subject-specific or general pedagogy

Multiple publications

Potential Source of Confirmation

- Journal
- Conference

Major invitations to speak on pedagogy

Multiple invitations

Potential Source of Confirmation

- Conference
- Inviting institution

Online materials for student education - creation and maintenance

Peer-reviewable learning materials that are used beyond the University

For Example

• including Open Educational Resources

Potential Source of Confirmation

 External users of online learning materials.

3.4 External esteem and recognition

With internal evidence

Commendation from External Examiners

Commended at least once at an Examination Board (identifiable by name or by course taught)

Potential Source of Confirmation

Head of School

Commendation in formal teaching review

Commended at least once (identifiable by name or by course taught)

Potential Source of Confirmation

Vice Principal Students

With external evidence

Appointment as External Examiner

Appointment in another University (Taught degrees) – with evidence of impact

Potential Source of Confirmation

External appointer

Review of teaching in another University - contribution

Member of review panel external to University

Potential Source of Confirmation

External appointer

Development of Quality Assurance in another University - contribution

Participation in Enhancement Led Institutional Review process at another institution

Potential Source of Confirmation

Quality Assurance Agency

Substantive lecturing at another University

Sustained and distinctive commitment – above and beyond a pooling relationship

Potential Source of Confirmation

External Appointer

Excellence in internationalisation of teaching

Sustained contribution to international student education

Potential Source of Confirmation

Vice Principal Students

Advance HE (HEA) recognition

Senior Fellow

Potential Source of Confirmation

- Advance HE
- Institute for Academic Development

Excellence in knowledge transfer

Sustained excellence in delivering Continuous Professional Development (CPD) course material

Potential Source of Confirmation

Recipient/sponsor of CPD

External award for teaching

Significant award

For Example

- Exxon Mobil award in Engineering
- Learned Society Awards
- Times Higher Education Supplement teaching awards

Potential Source of Confirmation

External awarding agency

4 GRADE 10 – Professor: Exemplars

Promotion applications need high-quality evidence. Within each of these sections we provide examples of evidence that an applicant can use to support an application and that a panel can use to inform its value judgement. Applications are not expected to cite all of these evidence sources and the examples listed are not intended to be exhaustive.

Most pieces of evidence will be more or less biased. For example, student questionnaire data may exhibit unconscious bias with respect to gender, first language, age and course content. It is difficult to attain good feedback in, say *Statistics for Biologists*, or *Electromagnetics for Engineers* but these are vital subjects. All data should therefore be looked at holistically and in context.

This is not a "tick-box" exercise and a sensible number of strong exemplars is more persuasive than a long list that includes prosaic exemplars. In particular, simply holding a leadership post or delivering a set of lectures is not useful evidence. Impact and effectiveness must be highlighted.

4.1 Direct teaching and support for University of Edinburgh students.

With internal evidence

Awards - and "runner-up"

Winner or "multiple runner-up" of major awards

For Example

- Chancellor's award
- Students' association
 - clearly, external awards are also valuable

Potential Source of Confirmation

- Students' Association
- Head of School

With external evidence

Named commendation from Teaching Programme Review or professional accreditation

Specific commendation, identifiable to the individual, for strategic contributions, leading to sustainable improvements in student education

Potential Source of Confirmation

- Vice Principal Students
- Head of School

Leadership of professional accreditation process

Potential Source of Confirmation

Head of School

External awards for teaching

Multiple awards

For Example

- Exxon Mobil award in Engineering
- Learned Society Awards
- Times Higher Education Supplement teaching awards

Potential Source of Confirmation

External awarding agency

Leadership of improvements to the student experience

Instigating and leading the development of, for example, teaching, assessment and student support that improves the experience of multiple students

For Example

- enhancements to student engagement
- enhancements to student transitions between school, university and years of study
- clear improvement in student achievement and retention
- clear improvement in support for WP (widening participation) students
- successful work with Alumni
- where relevant, evidence of contribution to meeting the needs of students with disabilities or special needs
- Active involvement with student extra-curricular activities

Potential Source of Confirmation

Director of Teaching

4.2 Leadership in student education

With internal evidence

Excellence in developing student education and/or support

Influential activity as Dean, Vice/Assistant Principal (in a student education context)

Potential Source of Confirmation

- Head of College
- Vice Principal Students

Strategic leadership of Teaching Programme Review (TPR)

Convener of panels that lead to a significant improvement to the Teaching Programme Review process and/or to the programmes reviewed

Potential Source of Confirmation

Assistant Principal QA

'Step-change' development in learning and teaching - leadership

Leadership of implementation group at University and/or College level. Successful and significant innovation in learning and teaching adopted widely across the University

Potential Source of Confirmation

Vice Principal Students

Innovative learning

Leader and instigator of a high-impact, successful innovative course

Potential Source of Confirmation

Vice Principal Students

Policy development for University education - major contribution

Sustained and effective leadership of a major external educational committee or substantive working group

For Example

- Government
- Scottish Funding Council
- Office for Students
- Advance HE
- Quality Assurance Agency
- Learned Society

Potential Source of Confirmation

 External committee organiser or organisation

Excellence in internationalisation of teaching

Sustained leadership of new and significant international educational links and/or improvements to international student education

Potential Source of Confirmation

• Vice Principal Students

Excellence in knowledge transfer

Leadership in development and sustained delivery of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) course

Potential Source of Confirmation

Recipient/sponsor of CPD

Effective mentoring and support for colleagues

Professors should provide both formal leadership and informal encouragement, guidance and mentoring to both junior colleagues and peers.

For Example

- Critiquing colleagues' teaching
 - including peer observation

Potential Source of Confirmation

- Head of School
- Colleagues who have been mentored/guided

4.3 Dissemination of excellence in student education

With external evidence

Authorship of influential textbook

Adoption in a course external to the University

Potential Source of Confirmation

- External adopter(s) of textbook
- Publisher
- sales figure

Author of publications on pedagogy

Multiple publications with demonstrable impact in the field (high citation count with respect to the journal's average)

Potential Source of Confirmation

Journal

Major invitations to speak on pedagogy

Multiple invitations at international conferences and/or internationally leading institutions

Potential Source of Confirmation

- Conference
- inviting institution

Creation and maintenance of online materials for student education.

Influential peer-reviewable learning materials that are used widely beyond the University

Potential Source of Confirmation

 External users of online learning materials

4.4 External esteem and recognition

With external evidence

Leading contribution to review of teaching in another University

Major influence in a review panel external to University

Potential Source of Confirmation

External appointer

Contribution to development of Quality Assurance in another University

Leader of Enhancement Led Institutional Review panel or equivalent at another institution

Potential Source of Confirmation

Quality Assurance Agency

Advance HE (HEA) recognition

Principal Fellow

Potential Source of Confirmation

Advance HE

5 Ongoing review of the Exemplars

This document was first published in 2013 and revised by the Teaching and Academic Careers task group in 2019. It is intended that the document will evolve and grow in light of experience and further examples.

It is likely that distinctively different areas of the University (e.g. Edinburgh College of Art, Medicine) will define new and different exemplars of teaching and leadership excellence that are not in the mainstream University mind-set. We encourage this form of creative thought. This is therefore neither a fully formed, complete document nor a one-off experiment. It is a step in a process that will stimulate the development of a more diverse and inclusive set of exemplars of educational excellence. Future promotion/reward cases that have been inspired and informed by this initial list will prove especially valuable.

Feedback is welcome to: uhrs@ed.ac.uk

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