The Professionalization of University Teaching

The experience in the UK, mainly through SEDA

What we have learnt through the International Consortium for Educational Development

Putting professional pedagogic development into context:
>   The issues
>   Developments within institutions
>   Developments in higher education

James Wisdom
Visiting Professor in Educational Development, Middlesex University
jameswisdom@compuserve.com

Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA) developed an accreditation process in the 1990s

Universities designed courses for it – usually mixing workshops and work-based learning, assessed for 60 credits at post-graduate level.

The SEDA model:
A. Recognition of the institution
B. Accreditation of the programme

Each award has:
1. Specialist Outcomes
2. Core Development Outcomes
3. Values

Example: Learning, Teaching and Assessing
(intended for academics teaching students)
Appendix 1

Growth of the SEDA model: Now 21 awards (Appendix 1)

For all categories of university employees who support
student learning in any way.

For academics who are taking leadership roles, or running
projects, or who are specialist tutors, or supervising
research etc etc.

Focus has shifted to continuing professional development

Creation of The UK Professional Standards Framework, 2006
(Appendix 2)

The Higher Education Academy Fellowship scheme at four levels:
Associate, Fellow, Senior Fellow, Principal Fellow
95,000+ now

(c200,000 academics in British Universities)

By accredited course or by direct application –
for Fellowship: 3000 word account of your professional practice organised around evidence of successful engagement with the 5 areas of activity.

The International Consortium for Educational Development has collected recent international picture: The Preparation of University Teachers Internationally (2014)

Qualifications required in Sri Lanka, Norway, Ethiopia, Denmark, Finland (polytechnics), Switzerland (Applied Sciences).

Qualifications expected in Holland (agreement between Rectors) and Sweden.

Standards framework in the UK, Sweden, Holland (UTQ) and Australia

Mostly – expectations within the institution

What was common before the growth of educational development?

1963 – UK Robbins Report – asked for skills for lecturing and seminars, so skills workshops during induction courses – "hints and tips"

Belief – Teaching was an ability you were born with, it could not be learnt

Belief - Teaching at university could not be researched

Main pedagogic model:
  Course designed around topics and content
  Didactic instruction
  Practice through essays and reports
  Assessment by examination

Do you recognise any of this?

Where did the pressures for change come from?

Increase in student numbers, but not in money per student

Expansion of HE beyond elite – 50% participation?

New technology

Sharing of experience of new and successful teaching methods, especially group work

Greater emphasis on quality assurance and interest in student evaluation of teaching

Research into student learning

Are you experiencing similar pressures?

What have been the developments in pedagogy?

From a focus on teacher performance towards a focus on student learning and course design

Constructivism and constructive alignment
Unit and programme design
More, and more appropriate, modes of assessment
Introduction of modularity for efficiency and student choice
Specifying and documenting programmes and modules using intended learning outcomes (quality assurance)

Do you have other or different developments in pedagogy?

What are the obstacles to further professionalization?

The relationship with research

Progression, reward and status – good policies, poor action. National and institutional teaching awards

Institutional development by projects or by strategy?

The growth of casual employment

Institutions too slow to modernise their practice

Target culture replacing professional expertise.

Is this your list of obstacles?

What are the possibilities for further professionalization?

Modernised programmes designed and led by pedagogic professionals

Students managing their own learning

Development of evaluation of student learning

Investment in continuing professional development

Learning and teaching for personal development through life

Can you see other future possibilities?

Questions

Do you recognise any of the same assumptions about "traditional" teaching?

What are the pressures on you to make changes to higher education practice?

What developments in pedagogy are having the greatest impact on your work?

What are the obstacles to the further professionalising of teaching?

What are the possibilities for the future?

References and sources

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For the Higher Education Academy Fellowship scheme: https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/individuals/fellowship

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For constructive alignment: Biggs, J and Tang, C (2011) *Teaching for Quality Learning at University.* 4th Edition. Buckingham: SRHE & Open University Press.

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For Quality Assurance: http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code

For relationship with research: https://www.mickhealey.co.uk/recent-publications

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For research into learning gain: http://www.hefce.ac.uk/lt/lg/